

# Same emotion, Different church

A research into the limits of acceptable  
change of the Grote- of Mariakerk

# Abstract

*Same emotion, different church*

More and more churches are closing, facing vacancy, or even being demolished at an alarming rate, as a result of the declining amount of ecclesiastical in the Netherlands (Het Bisdome van Haarlem et al., 2008); (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2020). While many churches are being repurposed, this isn't always easy, as repurposing is an extremely emotional process for the local community (Rijksdienst voor het cultureel erfgoed, 2011). The locals hope to maintain their Sense of Place towards the church buildings and when this is endangered, they go as far as placing restrictions on business dealings (Het Bisdome van Haarlem et al., 2008). One of these churches is the Grote- of Mariakerk in Meppel. Instead of the local's Sense of Place being a roadblock, this paper aims to find a way of working with their emotional bond. By measuring the residents of Meppel's Sense of Place towards the church, and defining the limits to which the form and function of the building can be changed, without diminishing or damaging the local's Sense of Place. By doing so, hopefully finding a way of repurposing the Grote- of Mariakerk with their Sense of Place instead of against it.



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# Introduction

## *Same emotion, different church*

With a peaking tower or a central square, churches mark the cityscape of many Dutch towns and cities as landmarks (Het Bisdom van Haarlem et al., 2008). Not only with their distinct design or as houses for worship and gathering, but as city symbols and significant components of the urban landscape ((Post, 2014) according to (Vdovychenko, 2019)). Unfortunately, many of these beacons of history, identity, and memory are facing vacancy, or worse, demolition, as a result of the declining amount of active churchgoers in the Netherlands (Het Bisdom van Haarlem et al., 2008);(Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2020). The declining number of churchgoers also affects the church buildings, as the income of the church institute consists mainly of voluntary contributions and collections (Beunderman, 2009). So, the decline and lack of funds, rising energy costs (Roetman, 2021), and maintenance of the church buildings make closure or even demolition of the church buildings a matter of time.

Nevertheless, despite the decline of ecclesiastical (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2020), support for preserving the churches shows to be strong within local communities (Rijksdienst voor het cultureel erfgoed, 2011), even among the non-churchgoers (Het Bisdom van Haarlem et al., 2008). Considering that church buildings reach outside of their religious use, and function as places of memory (Rijksdienst voor het cultureel erfgoed, 2011), gathering, celebration, commemoration, landmarks, and contribute to defying the cityscape and the atmosphere of villages ((Post, 2014);(NL Times, 2018) according to (Vdovychenko, 2019)), this is not strange.

As symbolic and historical places of remembrance, there is usually a great local appreciation and emotional attachment to the church buildings (Rijksdienst voor het cultureel erfgoed, 2011). In other words, there is a local Sense of Place towards the churches. While this emotional attachment explains the local support for preserving the church building and resistance against demolition plans (Rijksdienst voor het cultureel erfgoed, 2011), it also poses a problem, as the Sense of Place that the church buildings safeguard makes repurposing an extremely emotional process for the locals, especially for the clergy (Rijksdienst voor het cultureel erfgoed, 2011). So, despite the local support for maintaining the church buildings (Rijksdienst voor het cultureel erfgoed, 2011), the repurposing of churches is a problem (Het Bisdom van Haarlem et al., 2008);(Zomer, 2014)

When repurposing plans endanger the local's Sense of Place, the locals and their differing interests prove to be a roadblock. Among churchgoers, Catholics would rather demolish the church buildings than repurpose them to a function too far from the original (Fijter, 2019). While the Protestants, are open to a social/cultural repurposing. Nevertheless, church- and Non-churchgoers would preferably maintain a religious program and see a commercial repurposing as a no-go (Anker, 2019);(Fijter, 2019). With their emotional claim and wish to maintain their Sense of Place, locals sometimes go as far as placing restrictions on business dealings (Het Bisdom van Haarlem et al., 2008) by protesting or arguing for a monument listing (Zomer, 2014).



Figure 1 - The Grote- of Mariakerk in Meppel - own work

The Grote- of Mariakerk, a church in Meppel, presents one of these cases. The repurposing of the vacant church (after 600 years of active use) sparks debate, as some people are open to cultural repurposing, commercial repurposing is not an option, and most people want the religious use and their Sense of Place to remain. As a result of this impasse, investors and the municipality stay away from buying the church. In other words, the local's

Sense of Place is hindering the repurposing of the Grote- of Mariakerk. But does this have to be the case? Could the local's Sense of Place not function as a source of inspiration and a guideline for the repurposing process? Hence, why this research poses the following question: *“What is the limit of acceptable change to the sense of place for the local community, when transforming the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk in Meppel?”*



# Theoretical framework

## Sense of Place and Limits of acceptable change

**S**ense of Place is a concept that refers to the emotional bond and attachment that individuals or groups develop with locations or environments. These bonds can be positive or negative and range from home to nation scale (Foote & Azaryahu, 2009);(Najafi & Shariff, 2011). Sense of Place is not a predetermined phenomenon as it develops from the physical and psychological interactions between people and places (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013);(Hashemnezhad, Hoseini, et al., 2013);(Najafi & Shariff, 2011). From these experiences, an understanding of (everyday) activities, the physical environment, concepts, and symbolisms of a place is formed (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). Sense of Place is a concept with broad implications researched through many fields like geography, urban design, and

architecture (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). However, as this research concerns architecture, the Sense of Place refers to *a person or group's emotional attachment to a building (part of the building arts and environment) based on symbolisms and predominantly past interactions and experiences between people and the building.*

### Sense of Place and place

The notion of place represents an integral part of the Sense of Place. Especially considering the phenomenon is born from the interaction between people and places (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). One could even argue, that without people, a place is just a geographical location. The concept of place is signified

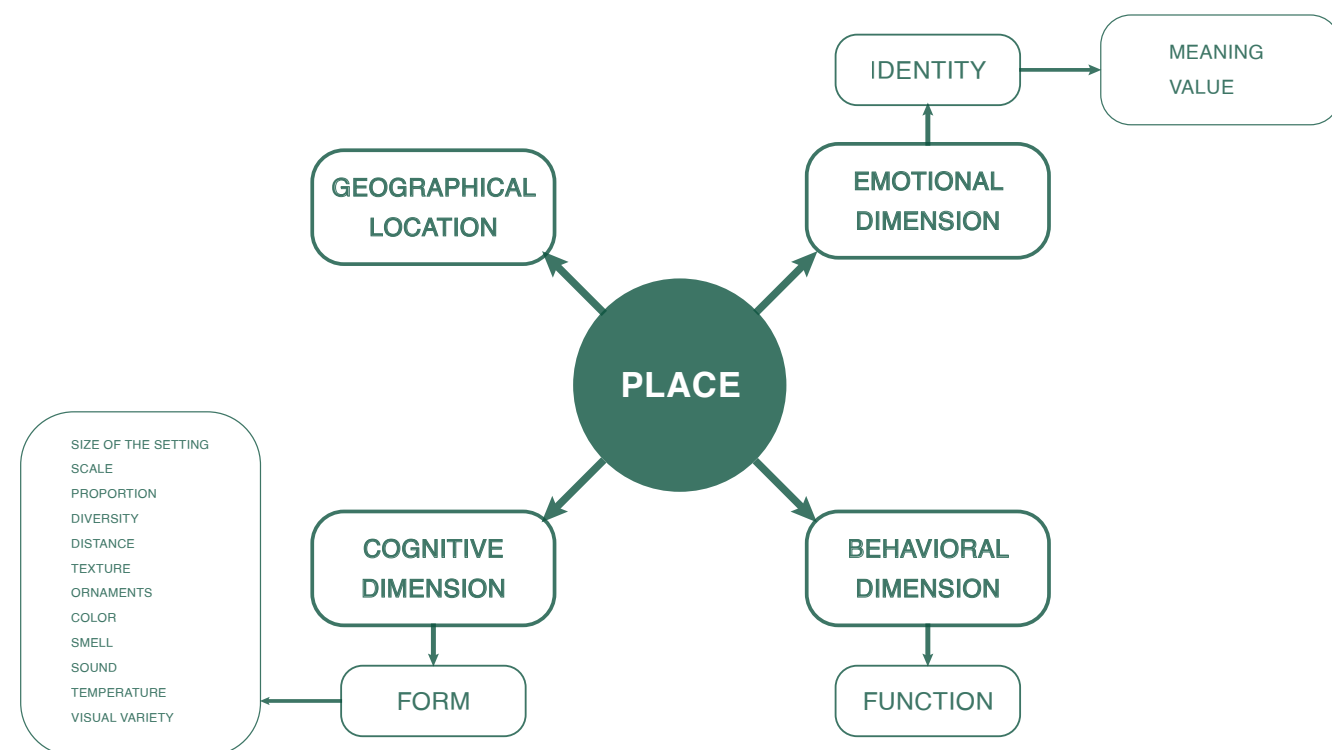


Figure 2 - Components that make up a place - ((own work) according to (JORGENSEN en STEDMAN, 2001);(Gieryn, 2000))

### Types of interactions between people and places

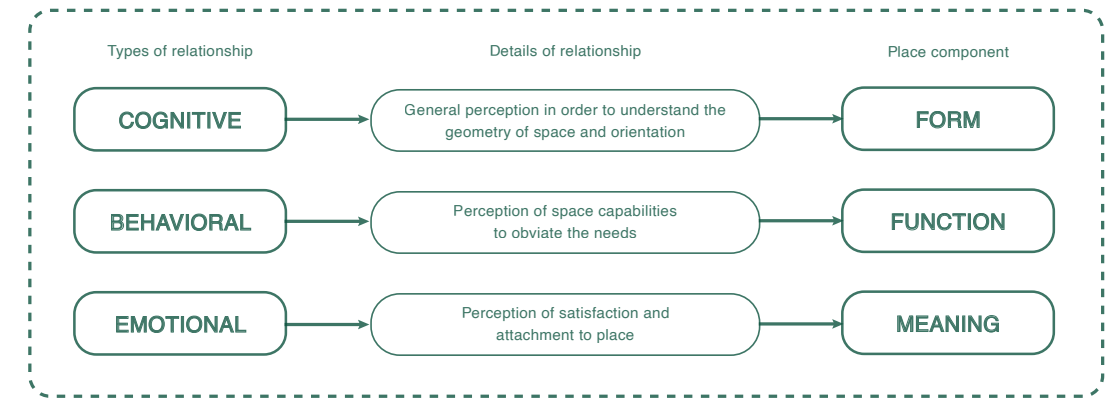


Figure 3 - Types of interactions between people and place - ((own work) according to (JORGENSEN en STEDMAN, 2001))

only by the existence of people (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). Generally, places have meaning regarding cultural, individual, and social processes (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). According to Gieryn (2000), a place is composed of a geographical location, the place's physical parameters (see figure 2), and its identity, or in other words, its meaning and value ((Gieryn, 2000) according to (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013)). JORGENSEN en STEDMAN (2001), argue more or less the same, as by their theory a place is composed of the emotional dimension (meaning), cognitive dimension (form), and their own addition to the behavioral dimension (function/use) ((JORGENSEN & STEDMAN, 2001) according to (Hashemnezhad, Hoseini, et al., 2013)). While the terminology might differ between the theories, they both argue that a place consists of its physical form, and identity/meaning, and both introduce different parameters in a place's geographical location and use. So, one could argue, as shown in Figure 2, that Based on the theory of both Gieryn (2000) and JORGENSEN en STEDMAN (2001), a place is composed of the geographical location, the emotional-, cognitive- and behavioral dimensions. Or in other words, the meaning of a place, the activities that it facilitates, and the physical presence of a place that we can touch, smell, hear, see, etc. (Najafi & Shariff, 2011);(Hashemnezhad, Hoseini, et al., 2013).

### Forming a Sense of Place

When developing a Sense of Place, people interact with the emotional-, cognitive- and behavioral dimensions (JORGENSEN en STEDMAN, 2001)), as shown in Figure 3. As a result of these interactions, people react to Sense of Place factors, specifically, the physical characteristics and cognitive and perceptual factors, as shown in Figure 4 (Najafi & Shariff, 2011);(Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). The cognitive and perceptual factors refer to the meanings and concepts understood by people within a place (Najafi & Shariff, 2011). Through understanding or matching oneself to the topics, objects, or ideas of a place

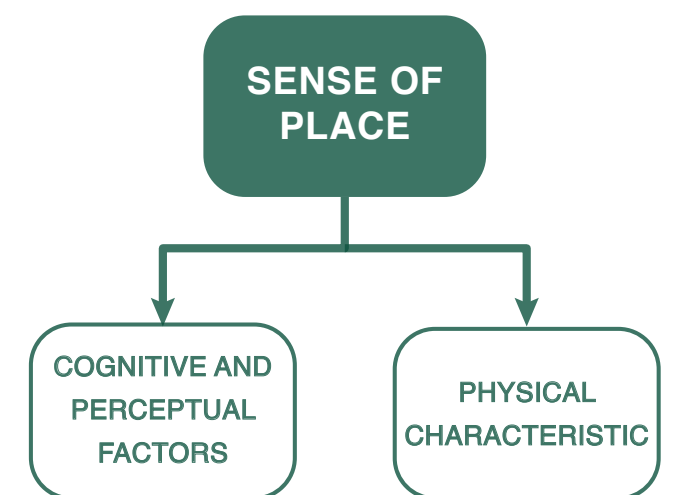


Figure 4 - factors that contribute to forming a Sense of Place - ((own work) according to (Hashemnezhad, Hoseini, et al., 2013))

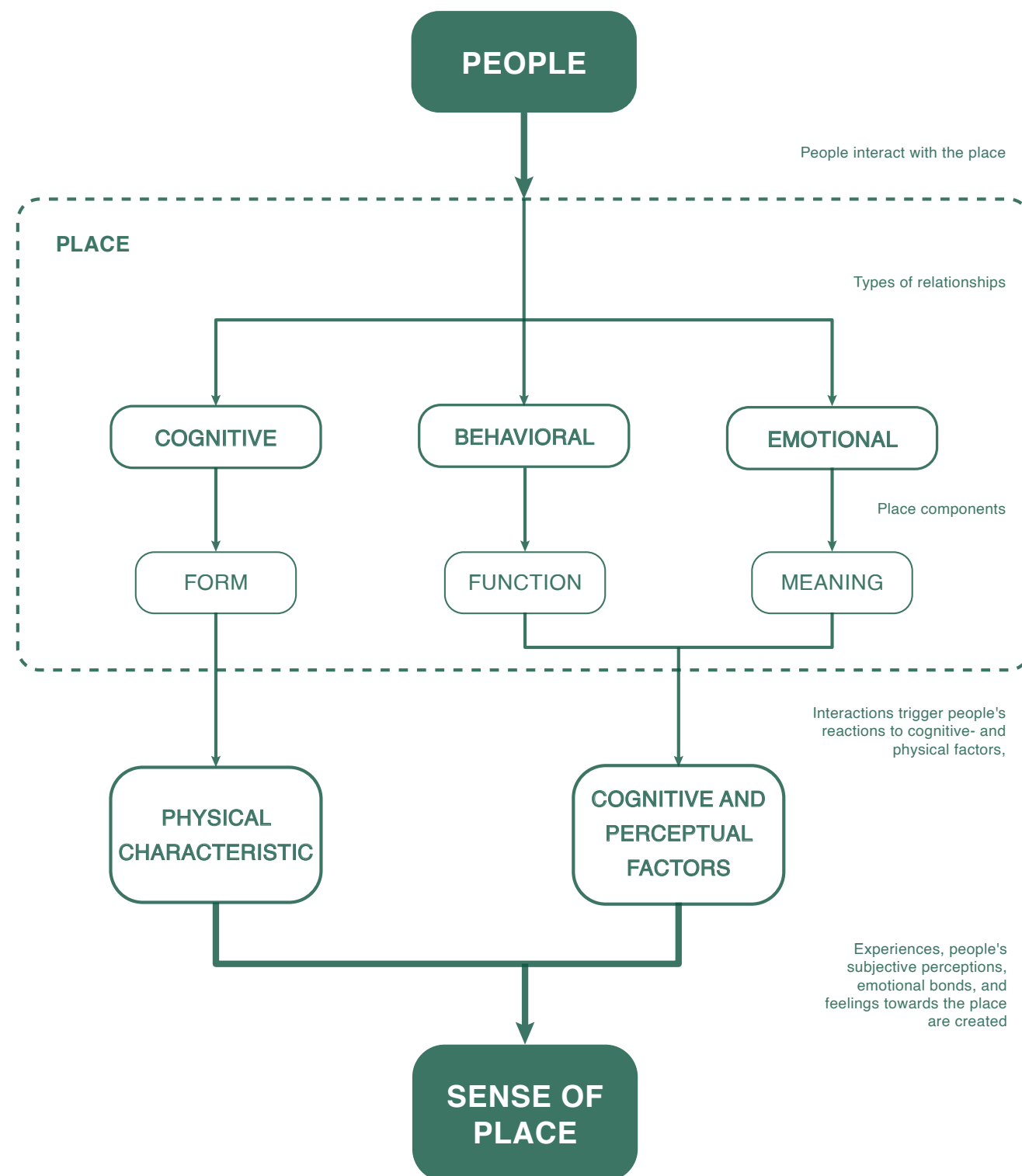


Figure 5 - The process of forming a Sense of Place - (own work)

cognition occurs (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015). The physical characteristics regard the physical perception and shape of the place, or in other words, the physical parameters (Najafi & Shariff, 2011);(Hashemnezhad, Hoseini, et al., 2013). As shown in Figure 5, When people interact with the cognitive dimension of a place, they react to the physical characteristics, and when they

interact with the emotional- and behavioral dimensions, they respond to the cognitive and perceptual factors. So, as shown in Figures 5 (and 8), when a person interacts with a place and its 3 dimensions he reacts to the Sense of Place factors, and as a result, a Sense of Place is formed.



Figure 6 - Shamai's (1991) levels of Sense of Place - ((own work) according to (Shamai, 1991))

### Levels of Sense of Place

Despite interacting with the same place, people form different Senses of Place between each other. These independent bonds with a place result from people's differing experiences, motivations, and intellectual backgrounds (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013);(Najafi & Shariff, 2011). These different bonds are defined by Shamai's (1991) levels of Sense of Place. Each of these levels, as shown in Figure 6, describes a person or group's relationship or bond with a place ((Shamai, 1991) according to (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013);(Najafi & Shariff, 2011)). The higher the level of Sense of Place, the more intense a person's emotional

attachment to a place is, as shown in Figure 6 (Najafi & Shariff, 2011). A person's Sense of Place can be both positive or negative, as shown in Figure 7 (Foote & Azaryahu, 2009);(SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005), however, the nature of the bond will only become apparent from level 3 and higher (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). Since if there is no or lack of attachment to a place, then there is nothing to be positive or negative about. So, when a person interacts with the 3 dimensions of a place and reacts to the Sense of Place factors, the level of Sense of Place is based on prior knowledge, experiences, and the amount, intensity, and variety of interactions with a place, as shown in figure 8.

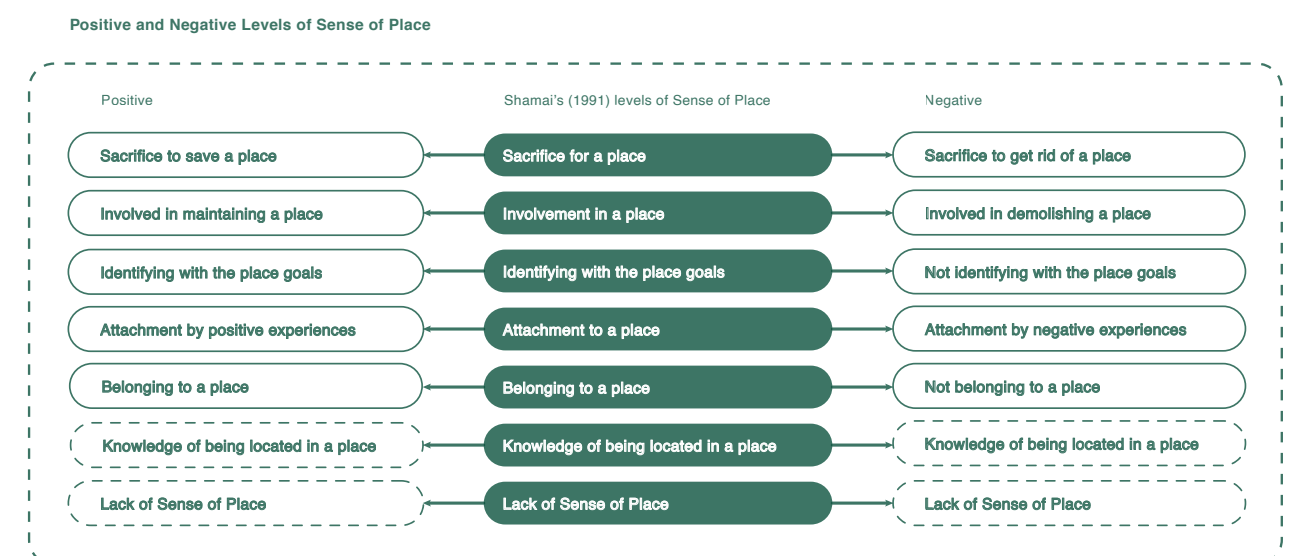


Figure 7 - The positive and negative sides of Shamai's (1991) levels of Sense of Place - ((own work) according to (Shamai, 1991))

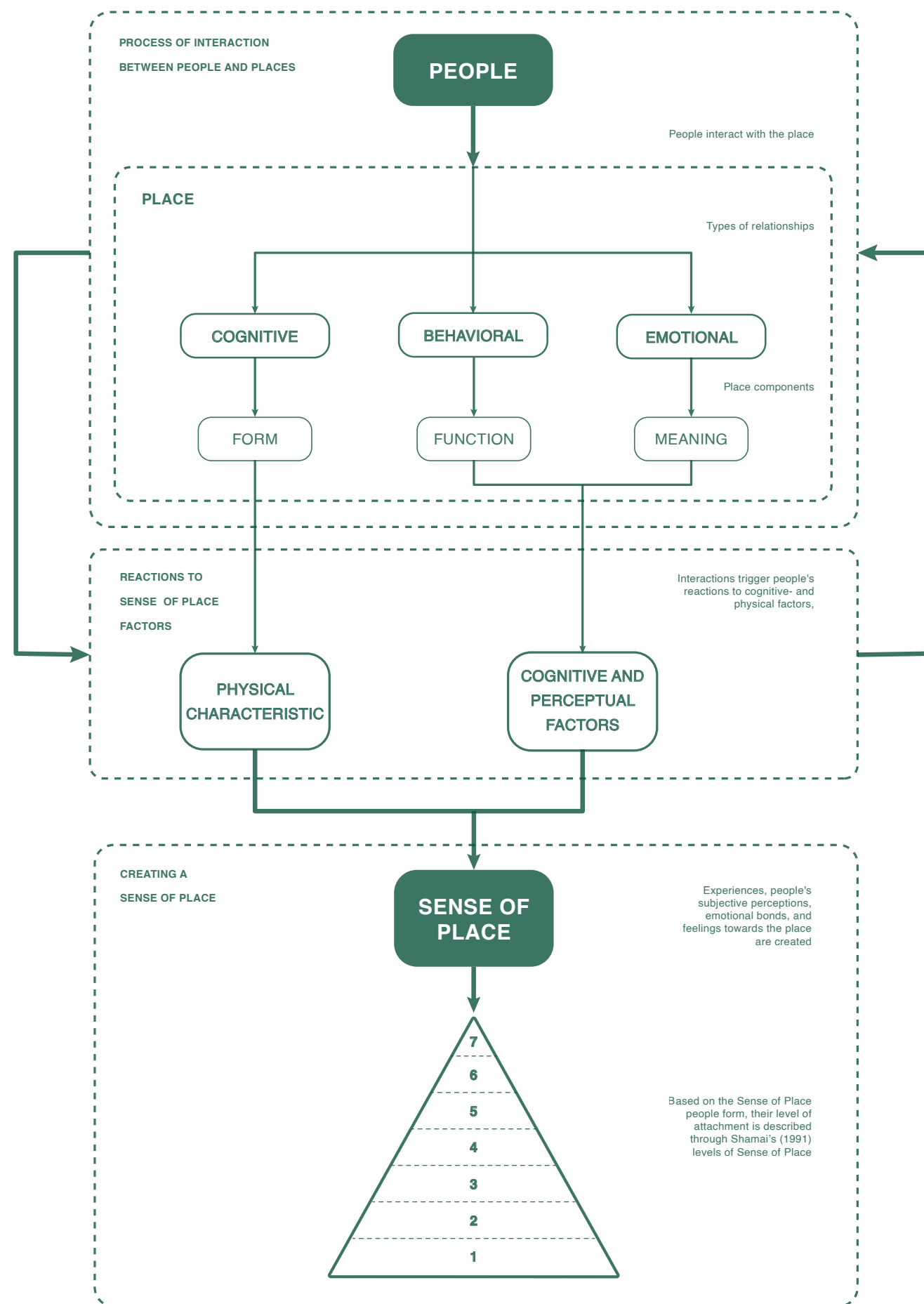


Figure 8 - The process of forming a Sense of Place + level of Sense of Place - (own work)

## Heritage and Sense of Place

Heritage buildings are usually objects that carry meaning toward groups of people. The buildings represent physical-, cultural-, historical-, social-, scientific-, aesthetic-, and emotional values (Dameria et al., 2020). So, the concept of a Sense of Place is especially relevant to heritage objects such as the Grote- of Mariakerk. Despite its relevance, the Sense of Place or references to 'the emotional value of heritage buildings' have only begun to be mentioned in government planning or vision documents around the early 2000s (Dameria et al., 2020);(UNESCO, z.d.). This is quite late, considering that placemaking stems from the 1960s and Sense of Place from around 1976 (Liu, z.d.). So, while the link between heritage and a Sense of Place seems obvious, the formal link between the two is only from the last 20 years (Dameria et al., 2020);(UNESCO, z.d.).

Furthermore, you could argue that heritage buildings always have a higher level of Sense of Place, otherwise, they would not be heritage buildings. logically, because it is inherent to heritage buildings that they carry meaning towards a group of people or a sense of larger-scale identity forming. This also results from people's existing frame of reference. For example, most people know and appreciate a church building. So, while they might not know the Grote- of Mariakerk, there is already a base level of appreciation through their frame of reference or

biases. Hence, why to begin with, some heritage objects like church buildings have a higher level of Sense of Place than 'regular' buildings or even old factories.

## Sense of Place and Zero-Waste

Designing with people's Sense of Place not only helps to maintain people's emotional bond and evaluation, but it also provides the opportunity for a sustainable way of designing. As mentioned before, a Sense of Place is based on the physical and psychological characteristics of a place (Najafi & Shariff, 2011);(Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). So, maintaining physical parts of the building and limiting physical and even psychological waste would not only be sustainable but also help to maintain a Sense of Place.

## Limits of acceptable change

The limits of acceptable change refer to the tolerable change of an area's social and environmental conditions. Aside from defining the acceptable change, as visualized in Figure 9, it also prescribes measures for maintaining these conditions (Schetter & Schetter, 2016). The theory mostly applied to nature conservation or tourism management, also applies to the dilemma between the protection and transformation of heritage (Schetter & Schetter, 2016). Hence, why the theory is used to define the limits of change acceptable to the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk.

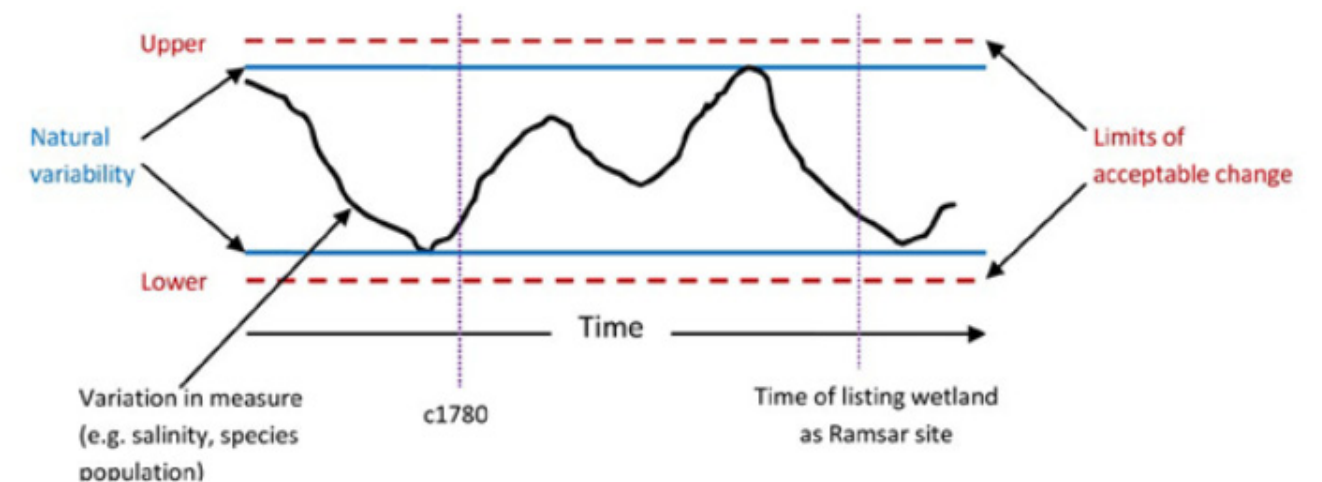


Figure 9 - An example of a graph showing the limits of acceptable change for maintaining Australian wetlands - (Access Denied, z.d.)

# Method

## Measuring the Sense of Place and Limits of acceptable change

The investigation of the limits of acceptable change of the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk was divided into two parts. First, measuring and defining the local's Sense of Place and what factors contribute to forming it. Secondly, investigating the limits to which extend the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk can be changed without diminishing or damaging the local's Sense of Place. The theoretical framework formed through the literature review served as the foundation for both parts of the (field)research.

The first part of the field research, measuring the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk, was conducted through a questionnaire supported by interviews. The choice for this form of field research has been formulated through literature research into existing studies about the measurements of the Sense of Place (see Appendix A). The investigation of these studies, in combination with the theoretical framework, also served as the theoretical basis for formulating the questionnaire. The questionnaire aims to distill who interacts with the Grote- of Mariakerk, what the nature is of their interaction with the church, what their bond is with the building, and what factors contribute most to forming their emotional bond with the church.

The questionnaire, shown in Figure 10, was conducted amongst the residents of Meppel, both churchgoers and non-churchgoers, who were approached mostly through Facebook and by phone. 126 people participated from various age groups, and religious backgrounds, who interacted in various ways with the Grote- of Mariakerk. To provide more nuance and background to the responses to the questionnaire, a total of 3 interviews with local churchgoers and non-churchgoers were held. During these interviews, the questionnaire and additional questions based on the results of the questionnaire were discussed (see Appendix B).

The second part of the field research, investigating the limits to which the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk can be changed without diminishing or damaging the local's Sense of Place, was conducted through field research. The field research, in the form of interviews, was split into two phases.

Within the first phase, 4 people were approached (the same as before) with scenarios regarding possible programs and large-scale form interventions for the Grote- of Mariakerk (See appendix C). During this phase, the emphasis was mainly on the possible programs, as the participants were asked how different functions such as housing, a library, a music venue, an 'indoor' park, a museum, or a combination would affect their Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk. In addition, the same question was asked regarding form interventions, such as a building extension, removal of elements, etc. Both the scenarios for the function and form interventions were determined based on field- and literature research (see Appendix C). As a result, the first design ideas or concepts were discussed and informed by the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk.

Within the second phase, the emphasis was on the form of the design and how the overall sketch design and concept affects the local's Sense of Place (See appendix D). For the interviews, 2 people (different than before) were approached with a sketch design for the repurposing of the Grote- of Mariakerk, specifically, floorplans, sections, and 3D imagery (see appendix D). They were asked questions concerning the intent of the design, the main interventions, and how the main ideas took form within the design. Furthermore, they were asked 'control' questions regarding the program, as interviewees did not participate in the first phase of the scenario interviews. As a result, it could be tested (theoretically) how the design dealt with and affected the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk.

Questionnaire for measuring the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk

Questions about the participants

Possible answers

What age group are you a part of?
<18 years old
18 to 25 years
25 to 35 years
35 to 45 years
45 to 55 years
55 to 65 years
65+ years

Do you work and/or live in the center of Meppel?
Working
Living
Both
None

Do you regularly attend church services / are you an active churchgoer?
Yes, at least once a month
Sometimes, during holidays
No

How long have you been familiar with the Grote- of Mariakerk?
Unknown
1 year
1 to 5 years
5 to 10 years
10 + year

What is the nature of your interaction with the Grote- of Mariakerk?
No interaction
As a landmark
Other gatherings or celebrations
None

Questions for measuring the Sense of Place

Possible answers

How is your relationship with the Grote- of Mariakerk?
-3
-2
-1
0
1
2
3

How are your memories of the Grote- of Mariakerk?
-3
-2
-1
0
1
2
3

Are you comfortable in the Grote- of Mariakerk?
-3
-2
-1
0
1
2
3

The Grote- of Mariakerk is important to you
1
2
3
4
5

You would sacrifice time or money for the preservation of the Grote- of Mariakerk
1
2
3
4
5

You would sacrifice time or money for the demolition of the Grote- of Mariakerk
1
2
3
4
5

The religious use of the church is important for my image of the Grote- of Mariakerk
1
2
3
4
5

The shape and appearance of the church are important for my image of the Grote- of Mariakerk
1
2
3
4
5

The ornaments and the history of the church are important for my image of the Grote- of Mariakerk
1
2
3
4
5

Questions about the factors that contribute to forming a Sense of Place

Possible answers

Which elements of the church's appearance contribute most to your attachment to or image of the Grote- of Mariakerk?
The church tower
The south facade
The east facade
The north facade
The west facade
The windows

Which elements of the interior of the church contribute most to your attachment to or image of the Grote- of Mariakerk?
The pillars (open space)
Religious objects
The organ
The windows
The galleries
The ceiling
The museum

Which use / function of the church contributes most to your attachment to or image of the Grote- of Mariakerk?
Religious use
Other gatherings or celebrations
Landmark
None

What contributes most to your attachment to/image of the Grote- of Mariakerk?
The exterior appearance
The interior
Its use
Its History

Figure 10 - The form of the (questions) questionnaire that was used for the field research - (own work)



Results

Measuring the Sense of Place and Limits of acceptable change

The responses to the questionnaire and interviews show that there generally is a very positive bond with and attitude toward the Grote- of Mariakerk (See appendix B). People have a positive attachment to and memories of the church and tend to find it an important and (historically) symbolic building for Meppel. There are some split opinions regarding the comfort of the building or the willingness to sacrifice to maintain the church. But overall, the building is highly appreciated and seen as representative of both the atmosphere and story of Meppel.

The participants regard the history, appearance, and decoration as important to their image of the church, while they tend to find the religious use of the building unimportant. The participants find the exterior appearance

and use as a place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting most significant to their idea of the church (See appendix B). Specifically, the locals find (most of all) the church tower (Meppeler toren), south facade, organ, windows, open floorplan, its symbolic nature, and its use as a place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting to be the most influential to their idea of the church (See appendix B).

When translating this to the factors that form the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk, it becomes obvious that the physical characteristics, especially the exterior appearance, are most influential to the local's Sense of Place, as shown in Figure 12. Of course, the aspects of the building's function and meaning as listed before also play a significant part, but for most people, the physical

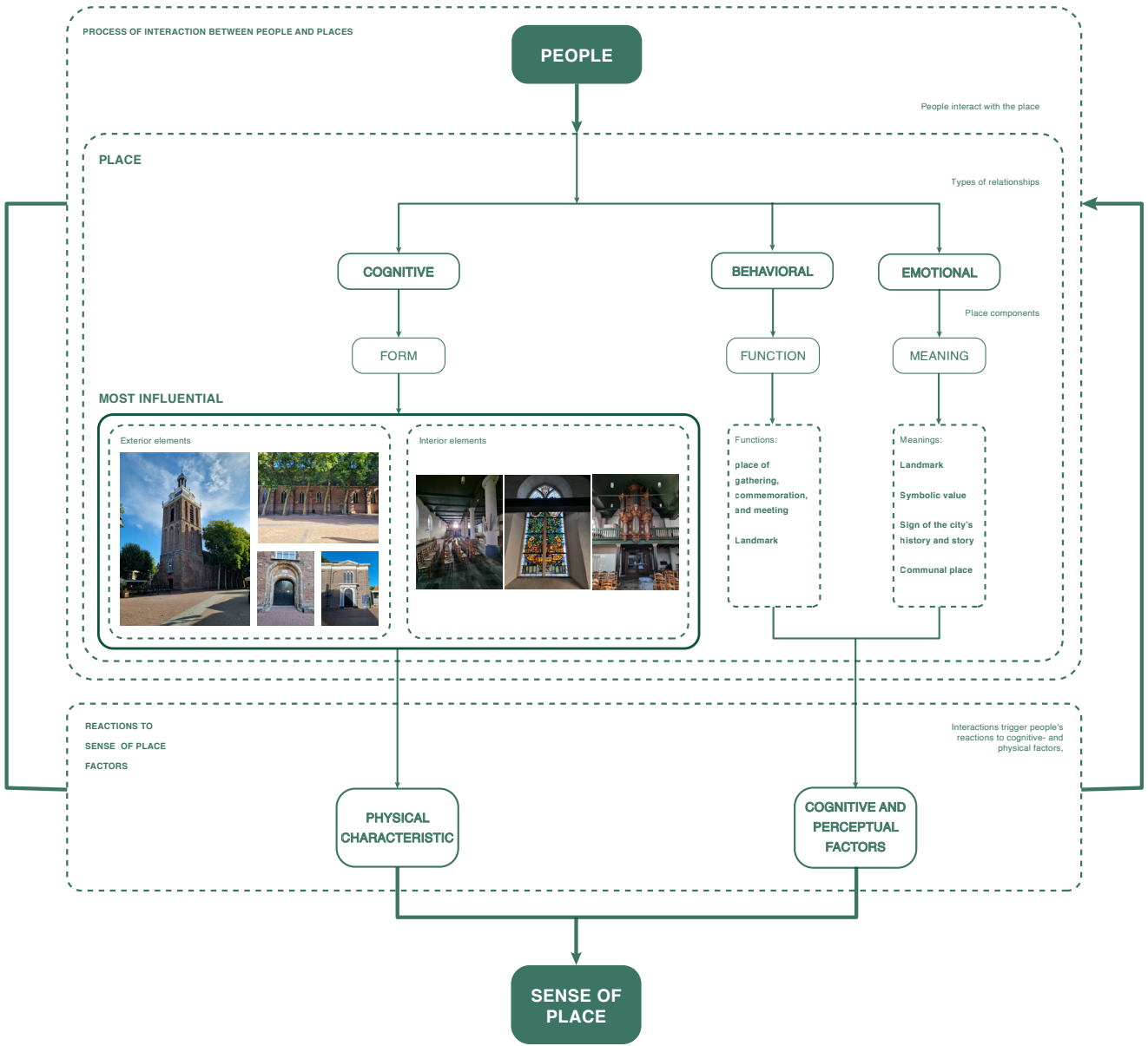


Figure 12 - Factors that contribute most to forming the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk - (own work)

characteristics are most essential in forming their Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk. So, when aiming to maintain the Sense of Place, this implies that the physical appearance might need some more care or perhaps less change and that there is a larger margin for change regarding the building's use.

Furthermore, as was to be expected, there is a 'large' difference between the responses of the older and younger participants, and between the churchgoers and non-churchgoers. The older participants tend to have much stronger and more positive feelings towards the Grote- of Mariakerk than the younger participants and

care much more for the use of the church. Logically, churchgoers care more for its religious use and generally have more positive feelings towards the church. These differences also reflect the different levels of Sense of Place among the participants. As shown in Figure 11, whilst everyone is at least in level 3, the churchgoers are amongst higher levels of Sense of Place (5 to 7), while the non-churchgoers are in the lower levels (3 and 4). Specifically, the older participants amongst the churchgoers and non-churchgoers are in the top levels (4 and 6/7) between both groups and the younger participants are at the bottom (3 and 5). Aside from the different levels of Sense of Place amongst the locals, this

The participant's Sense of Place towards the Grote of Mariakerk

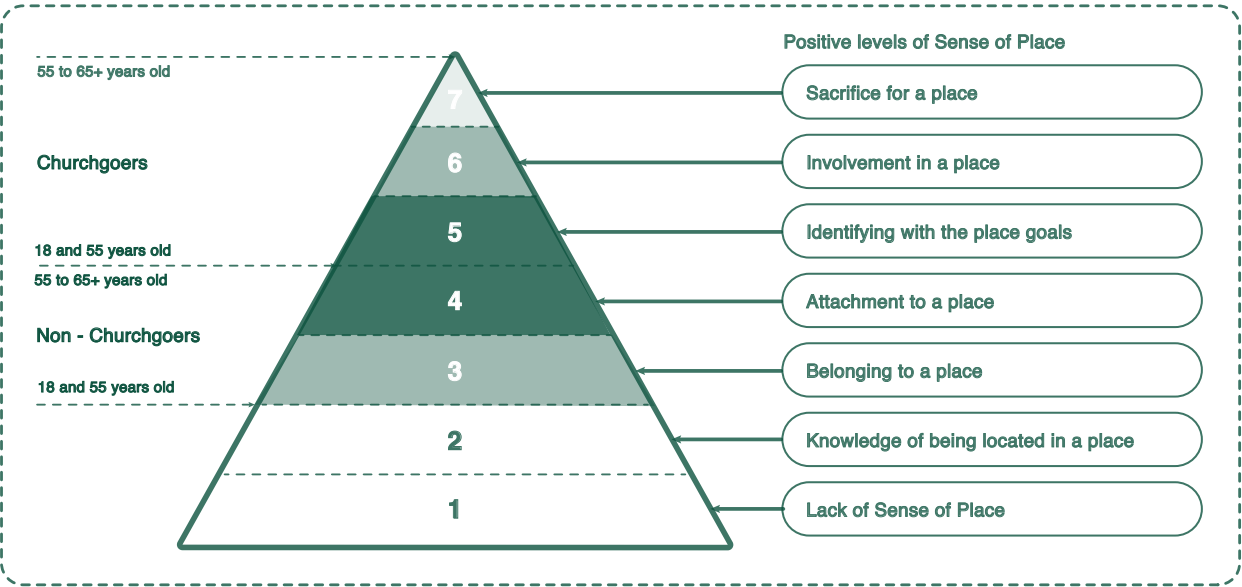


Figure 11 - Locals levels of Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk - ((own work) according to (Shamai, 1991))

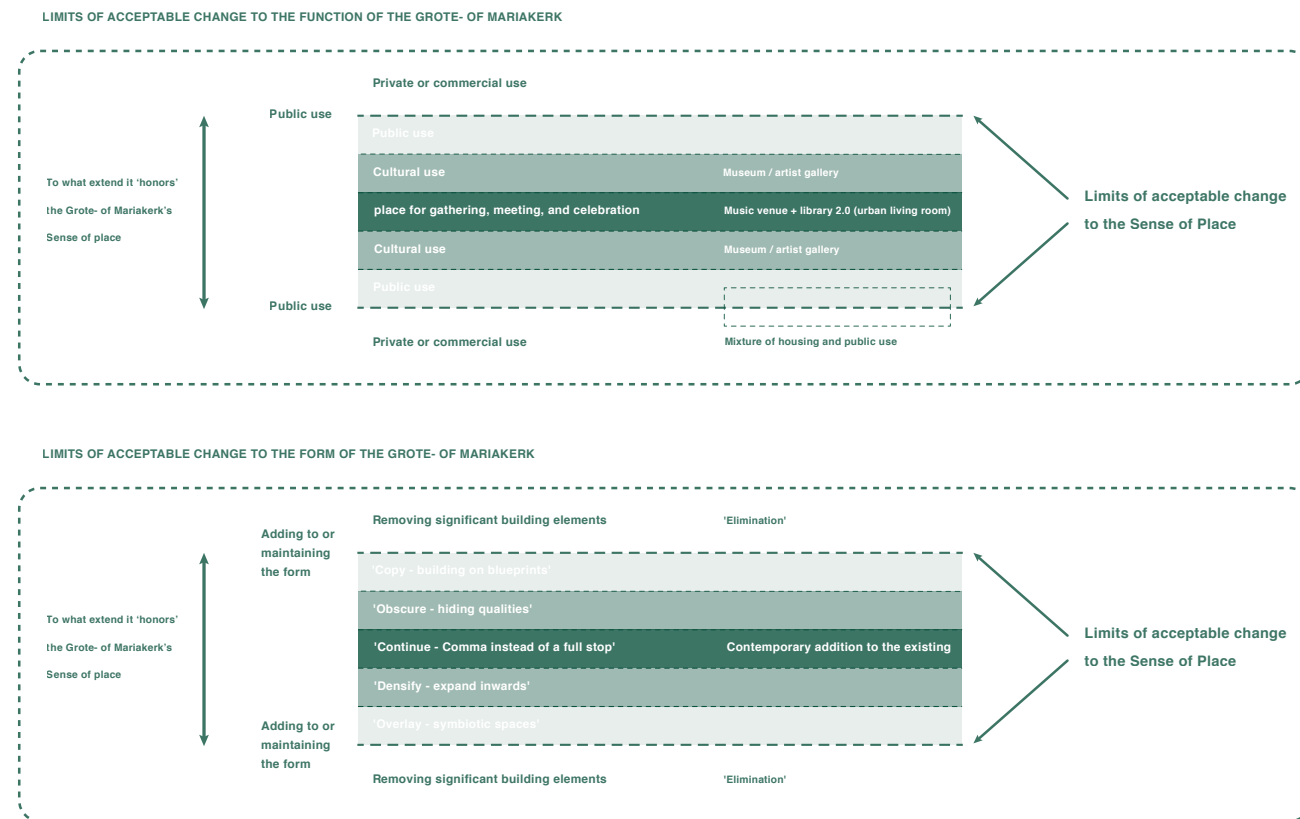


Figure 13 - *the limits of acceptable change to the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk* - (own work)

also implies that the Grote- of Mariakerk mainly appeals to the ecclesiastical and older residents in Meppel. So in the process of repurposing, there is a room or maybe even a need to speak more to the younger residents, to make sure that the Grote- of Mariakerk stays an active and appreciated symbol for Meppel in the many years to come.

Regarding the limits to which the Grote- of Mariakerk can be changed before diminishing its Sense of Place, there was a common thought among the interviewees (see Appendix C). Regarding the function of the Grote- of Mariakerk, unexpectedly, the participants weren't necessarily against housing, but against privatizing the church. The Grote- of Mariakerk has always functioned as a community home open to everyone and is very much seen as a public property. Hence, why the limit of change to the function is a public use, as shown in Figure 13. Most in line with the Sense of Place of the church is repurposing towards a highly public place of gathering, meeting, and celebration. Considering the Grote- of Mariakerks' past use as a community home and place for organ concerts, the locals found repurposing

towards a library and or music venue most in line with their Sense of Place towards the church. Otherwise, a cultural function was deemed fitting, as there is great pride in local art and history within Meppel. For the repurposing of the church, this meant pursuing a combination of a library, music venue, and art gallery as a way of working with and honoring the existing Sense of Place and paving the way for the Grote- of Mariakerk to continue to be itself with a different use in the future. The participant's reaction to the sketch design (see Appendix D) emphasized that this was the right choice, as they found the new program to be both in line with their idea of the church and a good addition to Meppel.

The same consensus was present among the participants regarding the limits of change to the form of the church (see Appendix C). Considering that the church has always been altered, enlarged, or reimagined to fulfill the changing needs of Meppel throughout the centuries. The participants all found an extension or form of intervention to be acceptable. Some even felt it to be necessary, as this repurposing marks a new time layer in the physical

timeline of the Grote- of Mariakerk. Hence, why removing large parts of the building was deemed unacceptable, as shown in Figure 13. While getting very specific regarding the form was not always easy, as it quickly becomes very subjective and based on personal taste, the interviews did provide very useful insights. The participants felt that the new additions/changes to the church should be in a contemporary style with possibly contemporary materials. While they appreciated contrasting additions, they did note that they would prefer any interventions or changes to the form of the Grote- of Mariakerk to be fitting with the existing parts of the church and not too predominant (even if a contrasting approach would be taken), as shown by figure 13. For the repurposing of the Grote- of Mariakerk, this meant going for a more subtle design approach that honors the existing materials, rhythm, and style while introducing a contemporary translation of the existing Grote- of Mariakerk that unfolds its rich history and provides room for new stories to be told. This design approach seemed to be fitting, as the participants noted that the subtle nature of the form interventions and design concept of the sketch design complimented the 'existing' church and was in line with the style of the existing parts of the Grote- of Mariakerk (see Appendix D).



# Discussion

## *Same emotion, different church*

While the measurement of the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk is both useful and insightful, it is of course, not perfect. 126 residents of Meppel participated in the questionnaire, which is only a fraction of Meppel's 34.761 inhabitants. As a result, (if we accept a 5% fault margin) the questionnaire has a representative value of 91,29%, and not the value of 95% required from a statistical point of view. The same goes for the number of people (7) that participated in the interviews for both the measurement of the Sense of Place and determining the limits of acceptable change. While this means that both the questionnaire and interviews are not as representative as they should be, it also speaks for the research. Considering how insightful, inspirational, and useful the 126 questionnaire responses and a handful of interviews are towards the design process, you can already imagine the worth of representative research.

From a theoretical standpoint, the concepts of place and the church building could have been incorporated more into the research. As eluded to before, people have general ideas or biases concerning church buildings, that also contribute to their Sense of Place towards a specific church. Furthermore, church buildings contribute to the cityscape as a landmark and atmosphere-defining object ((Post, 2014) according to (Vdovychenko, 2019)), which goes far beyond its geographical location or even the physical building itself. While some notes of the Grote- of Mariakerk's function as a landmark, its symbolic value, and historic value were made, it could have been mentioned more in the (questionnaire) measurement of the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk.

During the investigation of the limits of acceptable change to the form of the Grote- of Mariakerk, questions about changing the form and appearance of the building very quickly became about personal taste and preferences. While,

this part of the research provided to be very insightful, more and more specific data could have been won. By adding additional interviews somewhere between the start of the design and the sketch design. Naturally, the participants shouldn't be designing the building for you, but an extra moment of feedback could prevent a situation in which the wrong or unimportant aspects of the building and its Sense of Place are emphasized in the redesign. Nevertheless, despite its challenges, this part of the investigation already provided insights integral to the design process.

Regarding the results specifically, while many of the results were as you would hypothesize beforehand, there were new findings that changed the course of the design and understanding of the building, especially regarding the form. For example, it is no life-changing outcome that the church building appeals mostly to the ecclesiastical and older residents of Meppel, and that to most people, the exterior appearance of the building is most influential to their Sense of Place. It was, however, not expected that the national monument-listed east facade of the Grote- of Mariakerk was seen as too different, less special, and a separate part of the church. Another unexpected result was that people appreciate the church more as a place of gathering, commemoration, and celebration than as a house of worship, or that the housing function wouldn't diminish the Grote- of Mariakerk's Sense of Place, but privatizing the church would. So, in summary, while many of the results were expected beforehand, the research as a whole still provided many insights and results that changed the course of the design process, and perception of the church, and essentially showed that there is a small but still substantial difference in valuation between professionals and non-professionals (locals).

# Conclusion

## *Same emotion, different church*

So, What is the limit of acceptable change to the sense of place for the local community, when transforming the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk in Meppel? First and foremost, the Sense of Place refers to the emotional bond and attachment, positive or negative, that individuals or groups develop with locations or environments (Foote & Azaryahu, 2009). In this case, Meppel's local community towards the Grote- of Mariakerk. A Sense of Place is born from the interaction between people and places (Hashemnezhad et al., 2013). As people interact with the emotional-, cognitive- and behavioral dimensions of a place, they react to Sense of Place factors, specifically, the physical characteristics and cognitive and perceptual factors (Najafi & Shariff, 2011). After reacting to these factors, a Sense of Place is formed. As people have differing experiences, motivations, and intellectual backgrounds, they form different Senses of Place amongst each other (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). These different, positive or negative bonds are defined by Shamai's (1991) levels of Sense of Place. Based on prior knowledge, times, variety, and intensity of interaction with a place. people from different levels of Sense of Place.

In Meppel, the locals generally have a very positive bond with and attitude toward the Grote- of Mariakerk. To their Sense of Place, the physical characteristics of the church are most influential, especially the exterior appearance. Specifically, they regard the Meppeler Toren, South facade, organ, windows, open floorplan, its symbolic nature, and its use as a place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting to be the most influential to their idea of the church. Amongst the locals, whilst everyone has a positive bond with the Grote- of Mariakerk, there are of course differences amongst their levels of Sense of Place. As the churchgoers and older residents of Meppel tend to have a higher level of Sense of Place than the non-churchgoers and younger residents.

Regarding the limits to which the Grote- of Mariakerk's form and function can be changed without diminishing or damaging the local's Sense of Place, there is a common thought. The church should at least remain public, as its character as public property is significant to the idea of the building, as shown in Figure 13. Furthermore, they feel a program that embraces the church's character as a place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting would be most in line with the nature of the Grote- of Mariakerk. Hence, why a library or music venue would be a good fit when trying to maintain the church's Sense of Place. This was emphasized to be the right program/function, as people deemed it both in line with their idea of the church and a good addition to Meppe after presenting the sketch design to them. When it comes to the form and appearance of the church, removing large building parts is unacceptable, and people feel an extension or alteration of the church is acceptable, or to some, even a must, as shown in Figure 13. This alteration, preferably in a contemporary style, can be contrasted with the existing parts of the church. However, most people do feel that any interventions or changes to the form of the Grote- of Mariakerk should be fitting with the existing parts of the church and not be too predominant (even if a contrasting approach would be taken). This was, again, emphasized to be in line with the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk when the sketch design for the repurposing was discussed.

*So, a repurposing approach that stays within the limits presented in Figure 13, or approaches the optimal situation, would help towards a repurposing of the Grote- of Mariakerk that works with and hopefully maintains the local's Sense of Place. Which in this specific case, means repurposing the Grote- of Mariakerk towards a library and/or music venue in a way that esthetically honors the existing materials, style, rhythm, and history in a contemporary fashion.*

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**APPENDIX**

Appendix A - What tools exist for measuring the Sense of Place?

Investigation into existing studies about the measurements of the Sense of Place - sub-question 2

After the investigation into what the Sense of Place is within the realm of architecture, the second part of the research continues on the topic by looking into how the Sense of Place is measured. Despite clarifying the types of interaction with a place and what factors contribute to forming a Sense of Place, it is unknown how the Sense of Place is measured among the people that interact with a certain space. This part of the research is essential for the overall research because without it the field research cannot be conducted. During this investigation, several topics are touched upon, such as social groups and Sense of Place and methods for measuring Sense of Place. Through a literature review of various sources, as is shown in figure 1, research into sub-question 2: “What tools exist for measuring the Sense of Place?” is conducted.

Social groups and Sense of Place

Apart from a physical phenomenon, as mentioned before, a Sense of Place is also a social phenomenon (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013);(SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). In essence, people confer meaning to their environment in ways that reflect their social and cultural experiences (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). Based on ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, body, self, and the

list goes on, people experience places (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013);(SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). These differences also influence people their perceptions of their environment. For example, studies showed that in Washington DC, there were significant differences between how white people and African-Americans perceived the special advantages of the central city and the suburbs (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). As mentioned before, these differences between people, are why between different people, different Senses of Places can be formed towards the same place (Hashemnezhad, Yazdanfar, et al., 2013). While this isn’t entirely new information, it does provide an essential insight for the measurement of the Sense of Place, as it shows the importance of knowing the target group, where they come from, religious backgrounds, political preferences, etc (till the extend that this is possible). So, since the people’s or the target group’s background, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, body, self, etc. are so significant to the research, it is essential to the later field research to get to know and inventorize the target group.

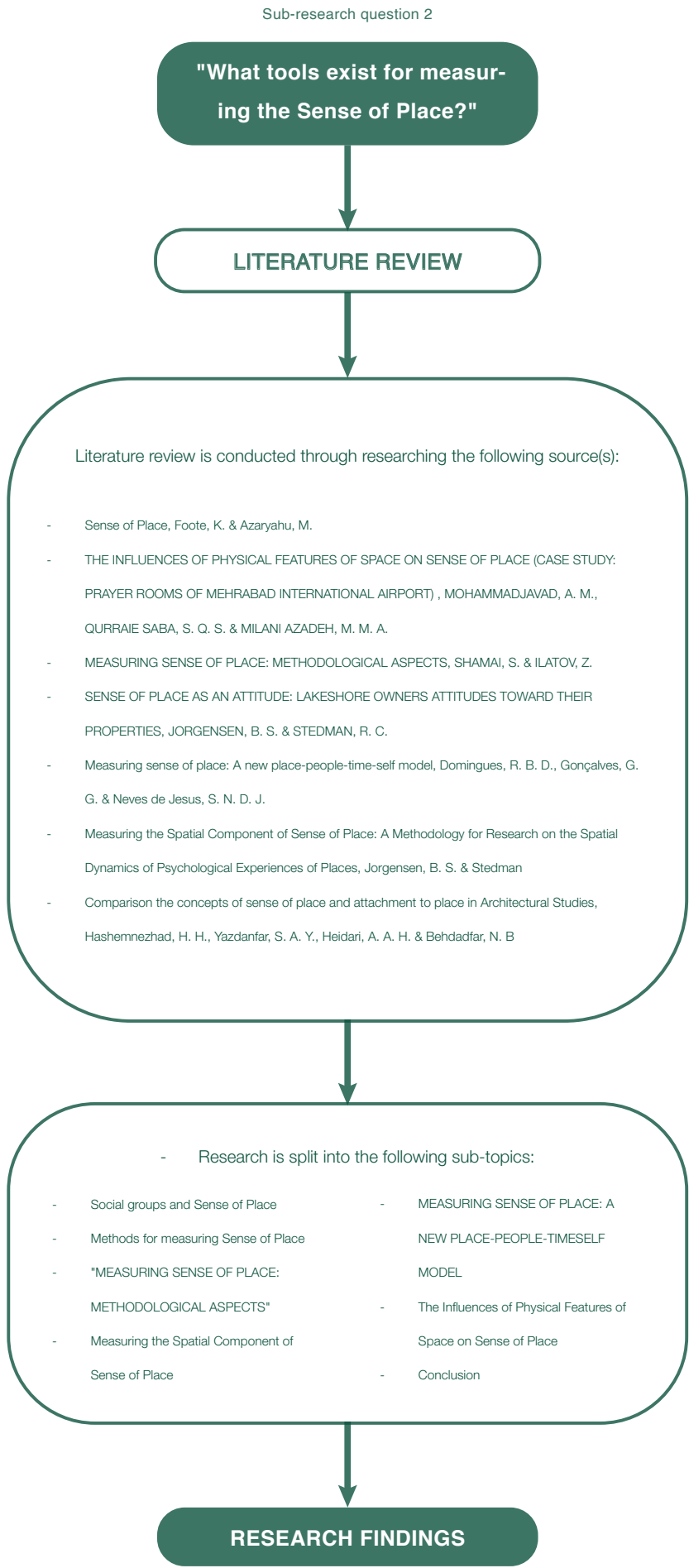


Figure 1 - Methodology scheme for the research into sub-question 2 - own work



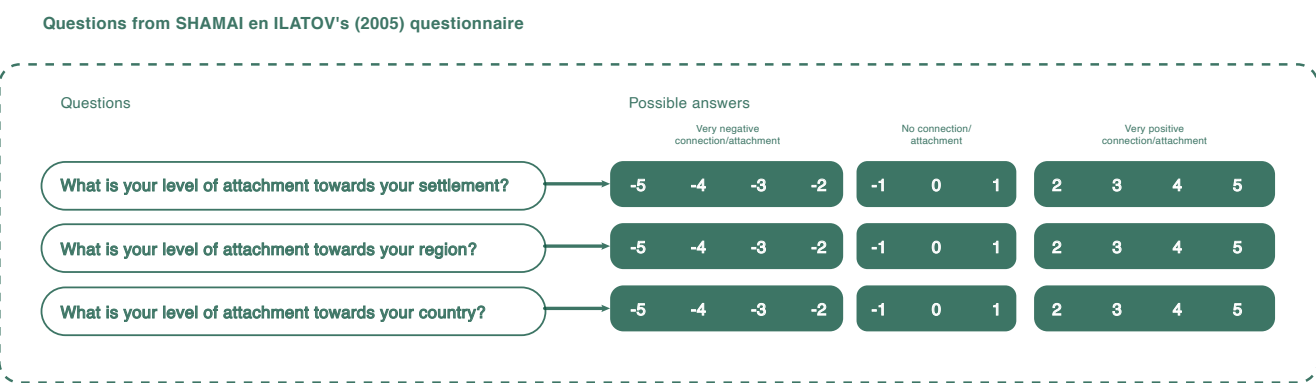


Figure 2 - The questions in the questionnaire from SHAMAI en ILATOV' (2005) - ((own work) according to (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005))

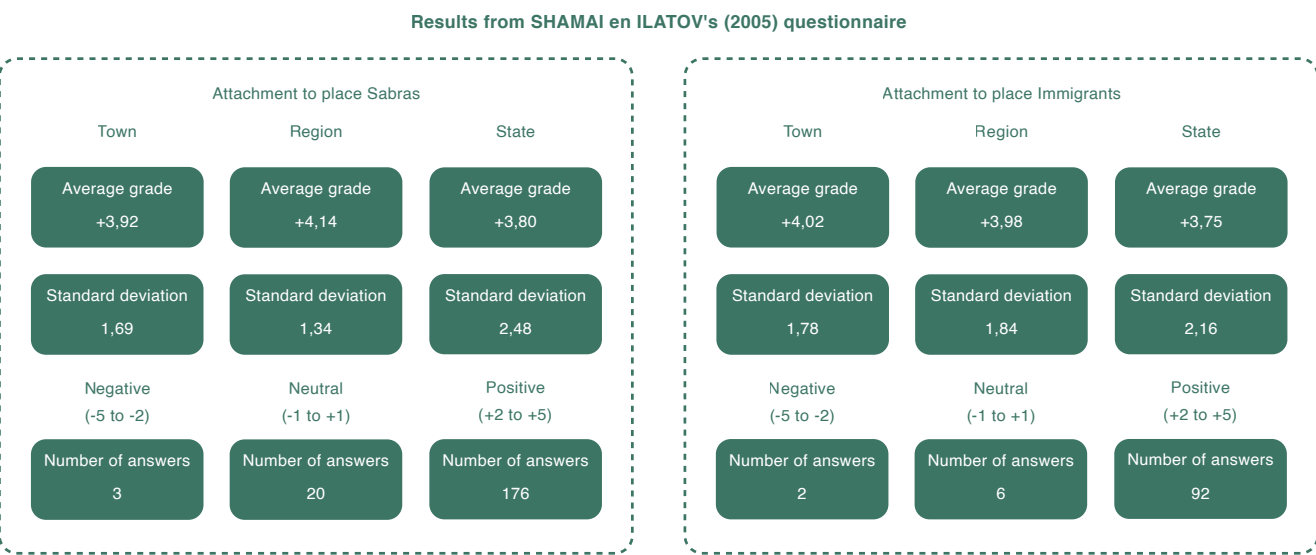


Figure 3 - The answers from SHAMAI en ILATOV' s (2005) questionnaire - ((own work) according to (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005))

Methods for measuring Sense of Place

Through analysis of existing measurements of the Sense of Place in various locations, the different methods that exist for measuring the Sense of Place are investigated. For this part of the research, the following papers were used for the investigation of methods of measuring: “MEASURING SENSE OF PLACE: METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS”, “Measuring the Spatial Component of Sense of Place”, “MEASURING SENSE OF PLACE: A NEW PLACE-PEOPLE-TIME SELF MODEL” and “The Influences of Physical Features of Space on Sense of Place”. During the investigation of each of the papers, the setting of the research, the goal, the method, and the implementation, and result processing is discussed.

“MEASURING SENSE OF PLACE: METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS”

SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) research concerns the different methods of measurement of Sense of Place. Furthermore, their research includes the measurement of the Sense of Place of the residents of Kiryat Shemona towards their direct environment, region, and the country of Israel. Aside from the measurement SHAMAI en ILATOV (2005) expands a bit further on Shamai's (1991) earlier research into the levels of Sense of Place by introducing scales of Sense of Place.

While a Sense of Place is mostly considered a positive phenomenon, it also encaptures people's negative

emotional bond with places (Foote & Azaryahu, 2009). As mentioned before, most measurements choose to ignore the negative feelings towards a place. While the possibility that people form those feelings is usually rare, it cannot be ruled out (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). SHAMAI en ILATOV (2005) considers negative feelings to be more important than positive ones, as the dominant component (positive or negative) plays a significant part in defining social boundaries (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). To classify the positive scales for measuring the Sense of Place, they classified the Sense of Place into four attributes: ‘polarity’, number of dimensions, number of components, and ‘directness’ of the questions (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). Each of these scales describes an element of the questions or the conduction of the interviews.

‘Polarity’ or the poles, describe the highest positive score or the lowest negative score of Sense of place. Unlike most ‘unipolar’ studies, the incorporation of both positive and negative makes this study a ‘bipolar’ one. There are also semipolar studies that range from ‘lack of Sense of Place’ to the positive pole. By making the target group give graded answers to their questions both poles were incorporated into the questionnaire. (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005)

‘Directness’ describes the directness of the questions. Are the questions phrased using direct or indirect techniques? When using a direct technique, it is assumed that the place in question exists in the respondent's mind. Direct questions also take the form of a question. While indirect techniques, do not necessarily take the form of a question, are complicated, and open to multiple interpretations. (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005)

‘Components’ represent the scales that a question is composed of. Is one direct question asked to receive an answer (one scale), or are several questions used to answer an overarching question (multi-component scale)? The components can be seen as a way of representing the sub-topics throughout a research and their size (number of questions). (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005)

‘Dimensions’ show how the different scales throughout a questionnaire are clustered. A ‘unidimensional’ scale combines several questions to form a single scale. A ‘multidimensional’ scale is composed of several sub-scales. For example, the sub-scales ‘positive’ and ‘negative’, are each composed of ‘place identity’ and ‘place dependence’. In summary, the dimensions show how several thematics are presented through the questionnaire and how these thematics are split into sub-themes. (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005)

SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) study was conducted in Kiryat Shemona, a northeast corner of Israel, located near the Lebanese border. The area contains 21.000 inhabitants, including 4.300 immigrants mostly from countries of the former Soviet Union (20% of the town population). They conducted interviews in 2001, one year after the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. Through face-to-face interviews in two phases, 453 immigrants, including 163 immigrants from the former Soviet Union were interviewed (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). The inhabitants were asked three different questions regarding the Sense of Place, visualized in figure 2. They used a bipolar, direct, and straightforward way of questioning, with a unidimensional scale (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). The questions could be answered with a grade ranging between -5 to +5. Within this range (-5) represented a ‘very negative connection/attachment’, (0) represented ‘no connection/attachment’, and (+5) represented a ‘very positive connection/attachment’ (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). So, if we were to link the grades to Shamai's (1991) levels of Sense of Place, a higher grade could hypothetically represent a higher level of Sense of Place. The side of the spectrum (+ or -) would then show the positive or negative nature of the emotional bond with the place.

After conducting the questionnaire, the results of 299 interviews were processed and inventorized. Based on those results, as shown in figure 3, SHAMAI en ILATOV (2005) established the attachment and level of the Sense

of Place that the target group formed with the different scales of their living environment. Based on the given grades, they could determine the attachment that people had to the places, positive or negative. Since they also included age, religious affiliation, education level, and the number of years of residence in the area in the study, they were also able to establish if the level of attachment or level of Sense of Place correlated or where influenced by these factors (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). As a result, SHAMAI en ILATOV (2005) were able to establish the level of Sense of Place of the target groups towards Kiryat Shemona, Galilee, and Israel, and what personal factors influenced the target group's Sense of Place.

While the research itself is interesting, to this research, the most significant is the way SHAMAI en ILATOV (2005) conducted, set up, and the research. So, the main takeaways from SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) "MEASURING SENSE OF PLACE: METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS" are first and foremost, to get to know the target group. Where do they come from, what is their background, how old are they, and what is their religious affiliation, etc. as these are all factors that could influence their Sense of Place. By laying out this information, connections can be made between their Sense of Place and why it is that way. This provides more background to the forming of the Sense of Place and what should be taken into account when working with the Sense of Place. Secondly, as mentioned earlier in the research, negative feelings should be incorporated into the research, as it provides a broader scope of answers and a way of dealing with the factors that contribute to forming negative feelings. Finally, SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) scales of Sense of Place should be incorporated in setting up the field research, as it could function as a guideline in making conscious decisions on how to structure the field research, how the questions are asked, and providing insight into the various themes. In summary, the main takeaways should be incorporated in setting up the questionnaire for the field research into the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

### Measuring the Spatial Component of Sense of Place

Jorgensen en Stedman's (2011b) research concerns the psychometric approaches for measuring the Sense of Place, primarily focusing on the association between people and research-defined spatial objects. The investigation describes the methods for measuring the spatial components of the Sense of Place, by integrating them with JORGENSEN en STEDMAN's (2001) attitudinal approach discussed earlier in the research (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). Aside from the methods for measuring, theories are discussed that provide more insight into the spatial components that affect the Sense of Place.

As discussed earlier, the scale of a place and the social- and physical factors that it encompasses affect the types and levels of attachment. Simply put, a different scale makes for psychologically different places (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). A bit like SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) research discussed earlier, various studies have investigated to which scale (house, town, province, country, etc.) people felt most attached. For example, in some European cities, studies show that people hold the weakest level of attachment to their neighborhoods compared with their dwellings and cities (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). Within these studies, JORGENSEN en STEDMAN's (2001) attitudes toward a place were also measured. Interestingly, is that the cognitive component was found to increase with scale while the behavioral component had no consistent pattern of a relationship with the place scale (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). To map the spatial components of the Sense of Place and how they vary between scales, Jorgensen en Stedman's (2011b) research discusses various types of Mapping.

*'Cognitive mapping'* has been used to determine neighborhood boundaries and how the scale of the neighborhoods influences the level of attachment (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). The type of mapping has been employed on both community and individual

scales. For example, Individuals would be asked to draw a 'map of the area where they live, are familiar with, and know well' from the top of their heads to obtain information about how people perceive their neighborhoods. It provided a method for noting significant landmarks, centers of activity, and paths within the addressed neighborhood. Based on the results, a map could be made that represents the neighborhood through the eyes of the community, the elements that they recognize the place with, and its boundaries (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). *'Cognitive mapping'* has provided some evidence that individuals who perceive smaller neighborhoods are more likely to have locally based friendship groups (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). 'Cognitive mapping' is an effective way of mapping how people perceive their physical environment and the things they value about it.

*'Affective mapping'* has been used to represent people's perceptions and beliefs about a place's features, boundaries, and behavioral patterns, but not necessarily for mapping emotional bonds to places (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). In studies where *'affective mapping'* had been used, people were handed a map of the area they lived in and were asked to identify areas with which they had a close relationship (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). The maps would vary in size, with scale varying between a single house to the whole city. While the questions provided a way of mapping areas of interest, and active areas of use, it does not include questions incorporating the meaning people convey to an area (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b).

*'Mapping meanings'* offers important insight into the subjective meanings people convey to places. The subjective meanings and the behavior associated with them depend partially on the scale of the place (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). According to the content of the places, the role of what people bring to it, and the scale of the place personal perceptions change. For example, while someone finds high amounts of traffic annoying on a neighborhood scale, the same person could value

the importance of regional economic growth that it goes hand-in-hand with (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). The scale of a place is consistently associated with different meanings, as smaller places are associated with the self and larger places with others or the environment.

Jorgensen en Stedman's (2011b) approach to mapping is *'attitude-based evaluative mapping'*. Each of the earlier described methods contributes to this approach. Cognitive and affective mapping facilitates the measuring of the spatial boundaries, and the participants define the scales and settings that are important to them (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). An important note is that sufficient instruction has to be provided to the participants to make sure that they know how to answer the questions, like telling them about the difference between attachment and intensity, or positive and negative (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). During the first part of the research, participants are asked to draw, describe or show the areas and or spatial objects that are significant or special to them. Once the boundaries have been set and the spatial objects have been determined for the individuals. The participants can be asked to identify in more detail what locations or physical features are of importance to them, and if they live, work, or are frequently close to that object (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). Furthermore, the participants can be questioned about the cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics of the defined object and area. For example, like in the research of SHAMAI en ILATOV (2005) a ranging system (-5 to 5) can be used to measure the participant's feelings, attachment, social meanings, or behaviors toward the place (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). Furthermore, social networks and interactions around the spatial object or area can be measured to provide more background information (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b).

Concerning the processing of results, Jorgensen en Stedman (2011b) themselves indicate that the data provided by the method of 'attitude-based evaluative mapping' is not necessarily the best for providing



conclusions for research into the Sense of Place (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2011b). The mapping does, however, provide a tool that can be used towards Sense of Place research, as the mapping can be used as content for questionnaires. Aside from asking the participants about their attachment to the place or making them describe or draw the spatial object or area in question. Questions about the object or area could be asked like, “what do you appreciate most about it?”, “*What is the first thing you think about when thinking about...?*”, “*What spatial components do you appreciate most?*”, or “*what does the ... mean to you?*”.

While unlike SHAMAI en ILATOV’s (2005) research, the research of Jorgensen en Stedman (2011b) is not as explicit or describes the methods used through a clear structure case study, the methods described by Jorgensen en Stedman (2011b) provide interesting points for the field research conducted later. For starters, defining the scale of the research area is essential, as it is highly influential on the factors that form the Sense of Place. Furthermore, ‘cognitive mapping’ seems like a suitable tool for defining the scale if necessary, and defining the spatial objects and areas that mean the most to the participants. This provides both further content for the questionnaires and insight into the spatial objects and characteristics that contribute most to forming a Sense of Place (Physical parameters). Furthermore, Jorgensen en Stedman’s (2011b) research also indicates that it is essential that within the questionnaire there is a way for the participants to show their attachment and intensity towards a place (negative or positive). Through the use of graded answers like in SHAMAI en ILATOV’s (2005) questionnaire (-5 to 5), this could be accommodated. The additional questions asked based on the mapping studies also provide useful for determining what aspects help contribute to forming a Sense of Place. So, while not all the methods described by Jorgensen en Stedman’s (2011b) research are suitable for the field research that follow later, the aspects mentioned before shall definitely be incorporated.

**MEASURING SENSE OF PLACE: A NEW PLACE-PEOPLE-TIMESELF MODEL**

Domingues et al.’s (2021) research proposes a new model and measurement of the Sense of Place as an overarching construct, using exploratory and confirmatory analyses (Domingues et al., 2021). The research suggests that a Sense of Place can be split up into four main factors, which are ‘*place*’, ‘*people*’, ‘*time*’, and ‘*self*’. Each of these factors responds on a different dimension, as shown in figure 4. Based on this quadripartite structure of the sense of place they formed a 32-item Sense of Place Scale to measure the phenomenon (Domingues et al., 2021). The measurement of the Sense of Place and execution of the model was not bound to a particular place, as they asked the Portuguese participants of the questionnaire themselves to choose a place and scale (house, neighborhood, city, etc.) (Domingues et al., 2021). Aside from the proposed method, the four factors and place attachment are briefly discussed to provide some background to the proposed method for measurement.

Before analyzing Domingues et al.’s (2021) method, the four factors have to be investigated to provide a deeper understanding of the method for measuring the Sense of Place. The ‘*Place*’ regards the emotional content or attachment to a place (Domingues et al., 2021). The ‘*People*’ factor corresponds to the sense of community present within the location in question (Domingues et al., 2021). The ‘*Time*’ concerns the significance of the length of residence or interaction with the specific location and the intergenerational transmission (Domingues et al., 2021). The ‘*Self*’ factor is more internally focused than the other factors and reflects the role of the location regarding an individual’s distinctiveness and self-esteem (Domingues et al., 2021). By addressing each of the factors, Domingues et al. (2021) believe that their quadripartite structured approach to measuring the Sense of Place is highly reliable.

To test the reliability of the 32-item Sense of Place Scale to measure the phenomenon, the research is split into

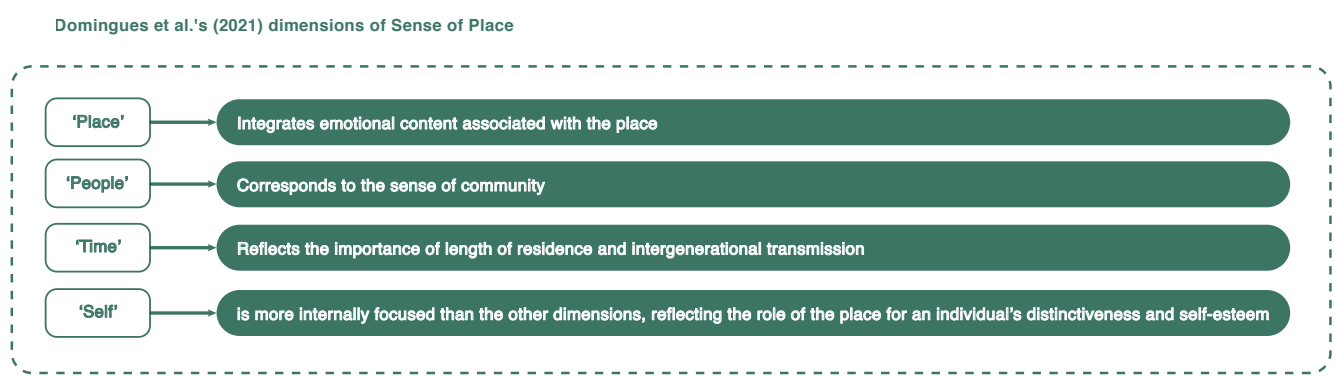


Figure 4 - Domingues et al.’s (2021) dimensions of Sense of Place - ((own work) according to (Domingues et al., 2021))

three studies in which they first apply the method, then test different methods, and finally retest their method to prove its reliability (Domingues et al., 2021). Since this research is into measuring the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk, only the method used within the first part of Domingues et al.’s (2021) study is of interest to analyze the different methods for measuring the Sense of Place. Hence, only Domingues et al.’s (2021) first part of the study is addressed.

Domingues et al.’s (2021) method, the 32-item Sense of Place Scale, is just like the methods discussed above, a measurement of the Sense of Place through a questionnaire (Domingues et al., 2021). The questionnaire, composed of 32 questions, as shown in figure 5, asks the participants questions that correspond to each of Domingues et al.’s (2021) four factors of Sense of Place. Apart from those four factors, each of the factors also touches upon sub-topics within their questions, as shown in figure 5. The questions could each be answered within a range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Domingues et al., 2021). A total of 466 participants participated in the online survey, from which the results of 432 of the Portuguese participants were eventually processed. Of those participants 95% were female and 5% male, ranging from age 18 to 73 years old with the majority of the participants being around 31 to 47 years old (Domingues et al., 2021). Most of the participants (87%) had higher education and the majority lived in Lisbon (35%) (Domingues et al., 2021).

Again, it is the method used that is of interest to this specific research. So, the results of Domingues et al.’s (2021) questionnaire will not be investigated that much. This also has to do with the level and depth of statistics that were used in the processing of Domingues et al.’s (2021) results, as understanding their approach to the processing of the results requires an understanding of statistics that I do not possess.

Nevertheless, from Domingues et al.’s (2021) 32-item Sense of Place Scale, many notes can be taken towards the field research into measuring the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk. First and foremost, again, it is emphasized how important it is to get to know the target group on a surface level (age, years of residence, level of education, etc.), as it provides background to why certain people or groups develop a certain Sense of Place. Secondly, while the four factors of Sense of Place might not be presented in the same way, the questions posed between the factors do provide valuable examples of how to measure certain aspects of Sense of Place. As shown in figure 6, some of the questions posed within ‘place’ and ‘people’ provide a good way of measuring the Sense of Place. The questions posed within ‘time’ and ‘self’ provide excellent examples of questions that help to get to know the participants. This also highlights the need to layering the questionnaire into different topics to keep it structured and accessible for the participants. Domingues et al.’s (2021) research overall does leave a bit to be desired regarding the measurement of the factors that contribute to forming a Sense of Place

Questions from Domingues et al.'s (2021) questionnaire

Questions	Possible answers	Corresponds to
Place		
1. I am very attached to this place	1 2 3 4 5	Place attachment
2. This place is important to me	1 2 3 4 5	Place attachment
3. I feel more comfortable here than in any other place	1 2 3 4 5	Place attachment
4. I want to keep living here	1 2 3 4 5	P. identity - continuity
5. I feel well intergrated in this place	1 2 3 4 5	P. identity - continuity
6. I feel that I fit in here	1 2 3 4 5	P. identity - continuity
7. I feel that this place is a part of me	1 2 3 4 5	P. identity - continuity
8. This place is the best place for what I like to do	1 2 3 4 5	Place dependence
9. I get more satisfaction out of being here than in any other place	1 2 3 4 5	Place dependence
10. I have good memories of this place	1 2 3 4 5	Rootedness - memories
11. This place brings me bad memories	1 2 3 4 5	Rootedness - memories
People		
12. I know the name of most of the people who live near me	1 2 3 4 5	SC – membership
13. I feel like everyone knows each other here	1 2 3 4 5	SC – membership
14. I don't know the name of most of the people who live near me	1 2 3 4 5	SC – membership
15. I value the opinion of my neighbors and community	1 2 3 4 5	SC – influence
16. Whenever there are problems regarding this place, the neighbors/community join to solve the problems	1 2 3 4 5	SC – influence
17. The community doesn't come together to try and solve the problems.	1 2 3 4 5	SC – influence
18. I can trust the members of this community	1 2 3 4 5	SC – integrat. fulfill. needs
19. People here care about each other	1 2 3 4 5	SC – emotional connection
20. Here, we help each other	1 2 3 4 5	SC – emotional connection
21. In this community, it's every man for himself	1 2 3 4 5	SC – emotional connection
Time		
22. I've been living here for a long time	1 2 3 4 5	rootedness – temporality
23. I feel life all my life was spent here	1 2 3 4 5	rootedness – temporality
24. I live here because my family (parents, grandparents) also live here	1 2 3 4 5	rootedness – intergen. trans.
25. Most of my family is from here	1 2 3 4 5	rootedness – intergen. trans.
26. Most of my family also lives here	1 2 3 4 5	rootedness – intergen. trans.
Self		
27. I am more similar to the other people who live here, than people from other places	1 2 3 4 5	p. identity – distinctiveness
28. People who live in other places are very different from me	1 2 3 4 5	p. identity – distinctiveness
29. People who live here are more similar to me than people who live in other places	1 2 3 4 5	p. identity – distinctiveness
30. When someone criticizes the place where I live, it feels like a personal insult	1 2 3 4 5	p. identity – self-esteem
31. When someone praises the place where I live, it feels like a personal compliment	1 2 3 4 5	p. identity – self-esteem
32. I really don't like when I hear someone criticizing the place where I live	1 2 3 4 5	p. identity – self-esteem

Figure 5 - Domingues et al.'s (2021) questionnaire - ((own work) according to (Domingues et al., 2021))

Questions from Domingues et al.'s (2021) questionnaire

Questions	Corresponds to
Place	
1. I am very attached to this place	Place attachment
2. This place is important to me	Place attachment
3. I feel more comfortable here than in any other place	Place attachment
4. I want to keep living here	P. identity - continuity
5. I feel well intergrated in this place	P. identity - continuity
6. I feel that I fit in here	P. identity - continuity
7. I feel that this place is a part of me	P. identity - continuity
8. This place is the best place for what I like to do	Place dependence
9. I get more satisfaction out of being here than in any other place	Place dependence
10. I have good memories of this place	Rootedness - memories
11. This place brings me bad memories	Rootedness - memories
People	
12. I know the name of most of the people who live near me	SC – membership
13. I feel like everyone knows each other here	SC – membership
14. I don't know the name of most of the people who live near me	SC – membership
15. I value the opinion of my neighbors and community	SC – influence
16. Whenever there are problems regarding this place, the neighbors/community join to solve the problems	SC – influence
17. The community doesn't come together to try and solve the problems.	SC – influence
18. I can trust the members of this community	SC – integrat. fulfill. needs
19. People here care about each other	SC – emotional connection
20. Here, we help each other	SC – emotional connection
21. In this community, it's every man for himself	SC – emotional connection
Time	
22. I've been living here for a long time	rootedness – temporality
23. I feel life all my life was spent here	rootedness – temporality
24. I live here because my family (parents, grandparents) also live here	rootedness – intergen. trans.
25. Most of my family is from here	rootedness – intergen. trans.
26. Most of my family also lives here	rootedness – intergen. trans.
Self	
27. I am more similar to the other people who live here, than people from other places	p. identity – distinctiveness
28. People who live in other places are very different from me	p. identity – distinctiveness
29. People who live here are more similar to me than people who live in other places	p. identity – distinctiveness
30. When someone criticizes the place where I live, it feels like a personal insult	p. identity – self-esteem
31. When someone praises the place where I live, it feels like a personal compliment	p. identity – self-esteem
32. I really don't like when I hear someone criticizing the place where I live	p. identity – self-esteem

Figure 6 - Domingues et al.'s (2021) questionnaires most inspirational questions - ((own work) according to (Domingues et al., 2021))

(physical and cognitive factors), but that is partially thanks to the fact that their questionnaire did not concern a specific location. Finally, the questionnaire again showed that having the questions be answered through a ranged system is the most effective, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) or from (-5 to 5) like in SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) questionnaire. So, in summary, the way Domingues et al.'s (2021) 32-item Sense of Place Scale got to know the participants, layered and set up the questionnaire, posed certain questions, and the format it chose to answer the questions provide good notes and examples for the later field research into the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

**The Influences of Physical Features of Space on Sense of Place**

MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) research into the influence of physical features of space on the Sense of Place focuses on well, just that. The research's objective is to determine what psychical features of space have the most influence on the physical factors or parameters that contribute to forming a Sense of Place. To do so, MOHAMMADJAVAD et al. (2015) determine what these physical features are and how much they influence the Sense of Place. Furthermore, they test these findings through a questionnaire. As a case study, the Prayer Rooms of Mehrabad International Airport are used for the questionnaire. Eventually, the results of the questionnaire are summarized in a form that shows the physical features that had the most effect on the Sense of Place of the participants (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015).

Unlike the earlier discussed research and methods, the study of MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) does not introduce new theories or studies that have not been discussed before within this research. Within MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) research, the significant data lies in the way their questionnaire was set up and conducted.

Their questionnaire regards the Prayer Rooms of Mehrabad International Airport across terminals two -and four. The target group for the questionnaire was male and female users of the prayer rooms of age groups between < 30 - 60 years old. The

prayer rooms between the two terminals were each divided into male and female prayer rooms of various shapes and locations within the terminals. Like SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) research, MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) questionnaire starts by collecting information about the participants, like their age, gender, and interest in the prayer rooms (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015). Furthermore, the questionnaire about the spaces itself is split into two parts, questions about the layout, organization, and overall attitude towards the prayer rooms, and questions about which characteristics are most essential to the identity of the prayer rooms, as shown in figure 7 (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015). The questions could each be answered by the participants by indicating whether they strongly agree, disagree, or everything in between with the posed statements. Doing so, providing the same easy-to-process and range-like approach to the answers as the research of SHAMAI en ILATOV (2005). (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015)

Like SHAMAI en ILATOV's (2005) research, as eluded to earlier, a portion of MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) questionnaire concerned the participant's attachment and satisfaction with the prayer rooms. To establish their Sense of Place or attachment to the place, they asked questions concerning the interest of the participant in the prayer rooms, satisfaction with the spatial conditions, (social) activities in the rooms, spatial layout, location, and shape of the prayer rooms. Through these questions, they tried to establish the participant's Sense of Place. (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015)

To inform the questions regarding the physical features of the space, MOHAMMADJAVAD et al. (2015) determined various environmental meanings and physical items/characteristics that are influential in forming a Sense of Place, based on their preliminary research into the Sense of Place. These features are, the shape of the place, location, conditions (sound, temperature, light, etc.), ornamentation, visual variation, decoration, texture, spatial relationships, and organization of the prayer rooms (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015). This

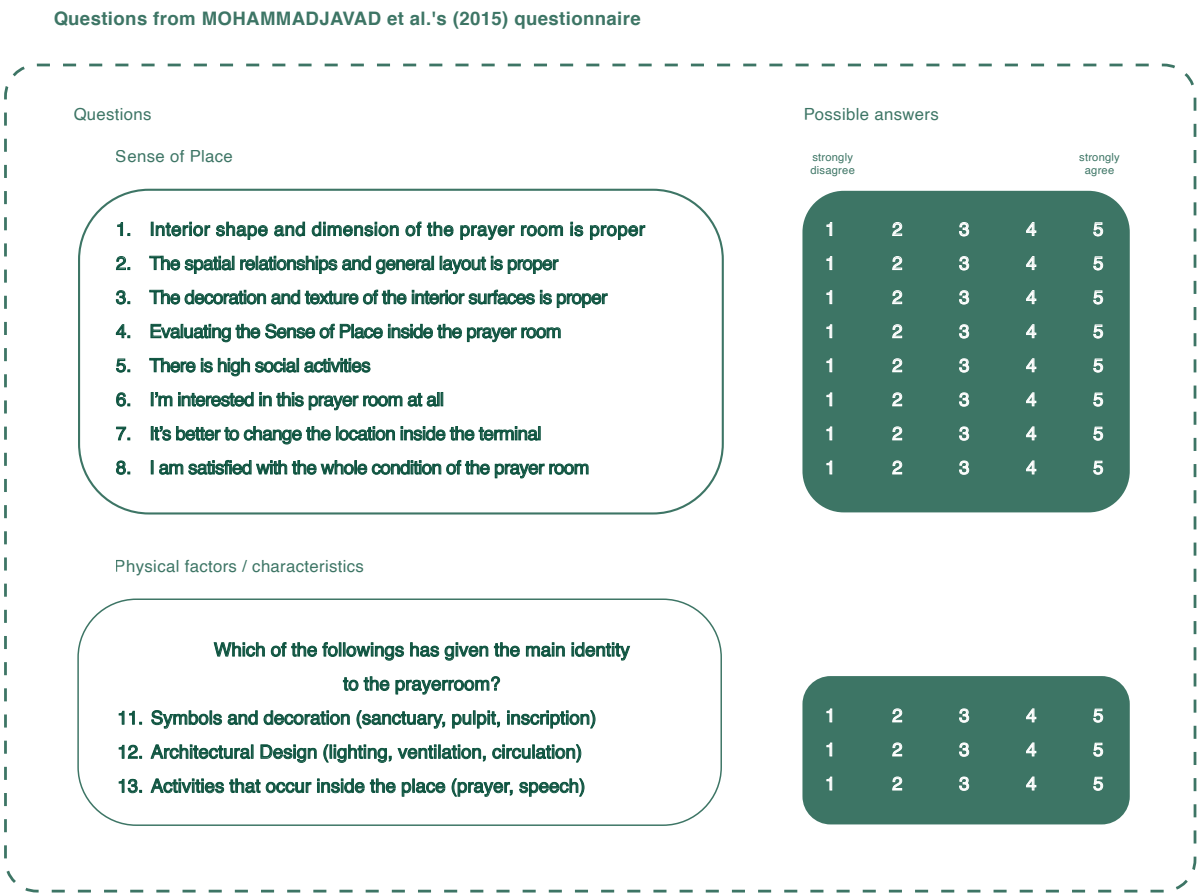


Figure 7 - MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) questionnaire - ((own work) according to (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015))

part of the questionnaire was supported by floor plans of the prayer rooms in question. (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015)

After conducting the questionnaire, the results were processed and inventorized between the two terminals, prayer rooms, and the genders of the participants. While again, the results themselves are not necessarily essential to this part of the research, it is, however, interesting to note the findings of MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) questionnaire. From their research, they found that the texture, decoration, and ornaments proved to be most influential in forming a Sense of Place. Despite the spatial layout and form of the prayer rooms sometimes being a negative factor, the texture, decoration, and ornaments proved to be a larger influence (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015). Furthermore, a relationship between the interest in the prayer rooms and the religious signs and decoration within the rooms was recognized, since the interest was higher when those physical features were more present. In hindsight, not

a strange finding, as these features also proved to be most influential in forming the identity of the prayer rooms (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015). As expected, there was also no correlation or differences between the participant's gender and their Sense of Place, at least not a noticeable difference. (MOHAMMADJAVAD et al., 2015)

When looking at MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) research as a whole, various points could prove to be useful for the later field research concerning the Grote- of Mariakerk. to begin with, the importance of getting to know the target group is emphasized again. By asking simple questions about the participants like their age, more background can be found considering why they form their Sense of Place and if there are large differences between the sub-groups (age groups, gender, religious background, etc.) of participants. Furthermore, the way the questionnaire was split into two intertwined topics is a good way of presenting the participants with the questions and building up the



questionnaire. First determining the Sense of Place and afterward defining what physical features are most influential in forming the Sense of Place. In the same way, questions could be asked about the function and cognitive factors of a certain place. In addition, choosing to determine the physical parameters through the earlier investigated theory proved to be a good way of presenting questions concerning this topic to the participants. Also, the way the questions were answered was again through a ranged system, ranging from highly agreeing or disagreeing with the presented statements. So, in conclusion, the setup, questions asked, and format of MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) research provide great pointers/inspiration for the later field research into the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

Conclusion

So, *What tools exist for measuring the Sense of Place?* After analyzing four different research papers that each present different methods for measuring the Sense of Place on various scales, answering this question is rather simple, as there is only one method to measure the Sense of Place, through a questionnaire (interview or survey). A less simple matter, however, is how the questionnaire should be set up, take place, and how the results should be processed. luckily, after research into the four research papers *“MEASURING SENSE OF PLACE: METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS”*, *“Measuring the Spatial Component of Sense of Place”*, *“MEASURING SENSE OF PLACE: A NEW PLACE-PEOPLE-TIMESELF MODEL”* and *“The Influences of Physical Features of Space on Sense of Place”*, that can be answered as well.

First and foremost, it is essential to get a good idea of who your target group or the participants are on a surface level. Simple questions about their age, years of residents/interaction, nature of the interaction, or level of education provide background to the participants and some argument as to why they form a certain Sense of Place. Furthermore, as a Sense of Place regards the emotional bond or attachment of individuals or groups (Foote & Azaryahu, 2009), it provides a way of making connections between certain groups of participants. For example, people from a certain age group all experience

the emotional bond with a place, or between the years of residents there are big differences between the participants.

Secondly, it is important to split the different topics of the questionnaire into separate parts. For the later field research, this means splitting the questionnaire into three parts: “getting to know the participants”, “measuring the Sense of Place”, and “establishing the factors that contribute to forming a Sense of Place”. Regarding the Sense of Place, different types of questions can be asked to measure it, as shown in figure 8. It is important, however, that within this part of the questionnaire, people are also able to express their negative experiences or bonds with the place. Since the Sense of Place ranges between positive and negative bonds with a place (Foote & Azaryahu, 2009). By incorporating a ranged system between -5 and +5 to answer the questions, this can be achieved. Within this range (-5) represented a ‘*very negative connection/attachment*’, (0) represented ‘*no connection/attachment*’, and (+5) represented a ‘*very positive connection/attachment*’ (SHAMAI & ILATOV, 2005). When measuring the factors that contribute to forming a Sense of Place, it is important to base the questions on the earlier investigated theory. So, like MOHAMMADJAVAD et al.'s (2015) questionnaire, asking questions about the physical characteristics and expand on that by asking questions about components that contribute to cognitive factors like the meaning, identity, or use of the place. The questions asked between the three parts of the questionnaire would look something like the questions presented in figure 18, these questions (if necessary), should also be supported by imagery, maps, or drawings if necessary. In contrast to the second part of the questionnaire, the questions in the third part should be answered through a ranged system, ranging from highly agreeing or disagreeing with the presented statements. The results of the questionnaire can be processed and presented through normal distribution, graphs, or drawings. So, in conclusion, *A questionnaire is the most efficient tool that exists for measuring the Sense of Place and it should look something like the format presented in figure 8.*



Figure 8 - Conclusion drawing of how the questionnaire of the field research should be set up - (own work)

## Appendix B - Sense of Place measurement results

*Results of the questionnaire and interviews regarding the local's Sense of Place - sub-question 3*

The questionnaire was conducted among residents of Meppel, the city in the province of Drenthe is home to 34.761 residents (AlleCijfers.nl, 2022). The questionnaire was conducted in December and 126 people participated in the questionnaire. The participants from different age groups between 18< and 65+ years old included churchgoers, non-churchgoers, residents (or working people) in the city center, and residents outside of the city center. The participants were mostly reached through Facebook messenger and were filtered in advance on whether they lived in Meppel through their profile. The participants were politely asked to share the questionnaire, which some did, and a small group of about 4 participants were approached in person after conducting in-depth interviews to provide more insight into the results of the questionnaire. As a result of conducting the questionnaire shown in figure 10 (research paper), the local Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk was measured.

### **General results of the questionnaire regarding the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk**

First and foremost, there are statistics concerning the participants of the questionnaire. Participants from age groups between 18< and 65+ participated in the questionnaire. As shown in figure 9, the highest response

rate is found among the higher age groups '65+' and 55 - 65 years old. In contrast, the third largest group is the age group of 18 - 25 years old. Regarding the place of residence (or work), there is a 50 / 50 split. As shown in figure 9, 50% live outside of the city center, and 50% work or live within the city center of Meppel. This data is incorporated into the questionnaire to see if there are differences when people interact more with the Grote- of Mariakerk. Furthermore, the largest group of the participants (58,7%) does not visit the church or practice religion. Of the participants, 31% do actively visit the church, which is close to the average of 34,8% of religiously active people across all of Meppel. This means that the participants are somewhat reflective of Meppel in General. Aside from visiting church ceremonies, as shown in figure 9, most people interacted with the church through other commemorations and festivities or as a landmark. Finally, almost all the participants are very familiar with the church, as shown in figure 9. This question was incorporated to see if the familiarity with the Grote- of Mariakerk would affect the results. Yet, as almost everyone has known the church for 10+ years it is irrelevant to see if there are large differences. The Grote- of Mariakerk is a known object in the city of Meppel.

The results of the second part of the questionnaire, which defines the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk. Shows that generally, there is a very positive bond with and attitude toward the church. As shown by figure 10, the participants predominantly have very positive attachments to or memories of the church. Furthermore, the Grote- of Mariakerk is an important building to the residents of Meppel. Participants with a negative, contrasting, or neutral opinion regarding those topics make up below 25% of the participants. Despite the generally positive responses, there are differing opinions regarding the participant's comfort and willingness to sacrifice towards maintaining the church. The largest groups of participants are very positive or neutral towards their comfort in the church. This is probably a result of that many of the non-churchgoers have never been in the church (or that it was cold) and that the churchgoers cherish the church ceremonies that they had in the Grote- of Mariakerk. The split between how much the groups are willing to sacrifice is probably also a result of the split between the churchgoers and non-churchgoers, however, the largest part of the participants is neutral towards sacrificing time or money to maintain the church. Luckily, close to no one wants the church to be demolished, as shown in figure 10. Furthermore, the participants regard the appearance, decoration, and history of the church as important factors in how they perceive and appreciate the Grote- of Mariakerk. The same cannot be said about the religious use of the building. Aside from (probably) the churchgoers, the largest part of the participants does not regard the religious use of the building as important to their bond or image of the Grote- of Mariakerk, as shown in figure 11.

The results of the third and final part of the questionnaire, show the most significant factors in forming the participant's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk. Between the results, it is clear that certain elements stand out strongly in terms of the influence they have on the Sense of Place of the participants concerning the Grote or Mariakerk. Regarding the exterior elements, as shown in figure 11, the church tower is by far the most influential, closely followed by the south- and east facades. Surprising, however, is that the south facade

comes out as more influential than the characteristic classic east facade. The substantial amount of votes for the west facade was also a surprising outcome. within the interior of the church, three elements stand out, the organ, pillars, open-floorplan, and, surprisingly, the windows (tainted glass) are the most influential on the Sense of Place by far. Among the different uses of the church, some responses stand out. To most participants, as shown by figure 11, the most influential functions are the church as a landmark, and as a place of commemoration, celebration and meeting. Only 29 participants considered the religious use of the building to be most important, which is not a lot, considering 39 active and 13 occasional churchgoers participated in the questionnaire. Finally, more than half of the participants considered the exterior appearance of the building to be most important to their emotional bond with the Grote- of Mariakerk.

### **Differences between the results of the target groups of the questionnaire regarding the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk**

To confirm previously stated prejudices, the differing results between the target groups are investigated by checking the differences between the different religious participation and age groups among the participants. A small note is that the differences between the groups in familiarity with the Grote- of Mariakerk and place of residence (or work) have not been investigated further. This is because whilst processing the results, there did not seem to be a difference between how the different participants perceived the church. Furthermore, as mentioned before, almost all the participants had known the church for 10+ years. So, there weren't any results to compare. By comparing the results of the different religious participation and age groups, the groups can be linked to the different levels of Sense of Place. It also helps to determine what factors influence their Sense of Place most. Additionally, the input of the participants helps to revalue certain elements of the church and add a layer to the value assessment of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

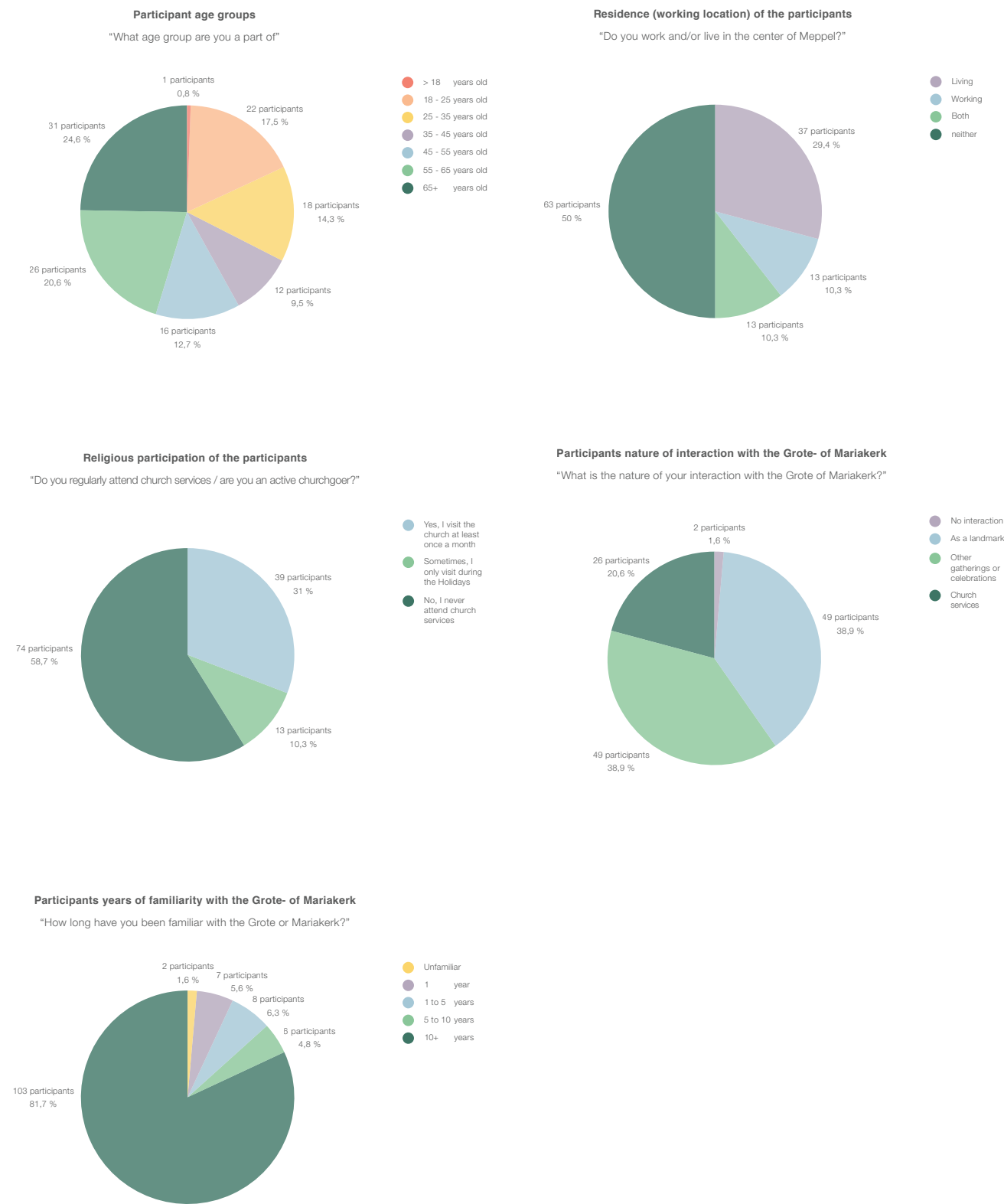


Figure 9 - Information about the participants that participated with the questionnaire - (own work)



Figure 10 - General results showing how the participants answered the questionnaire - (own work)

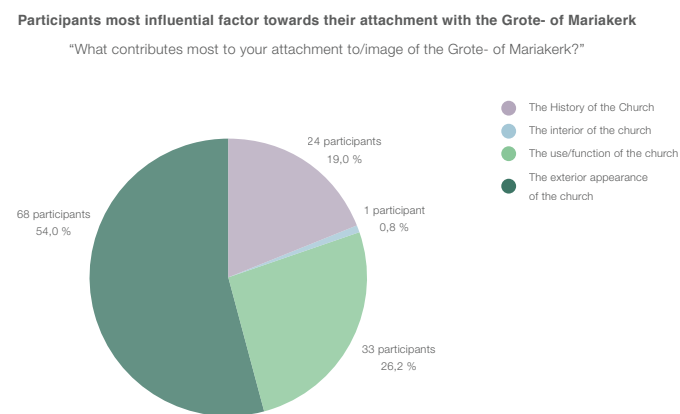
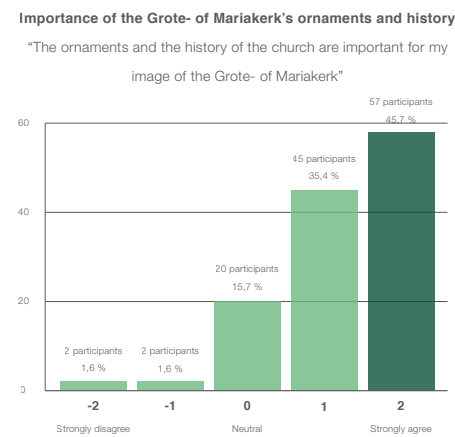
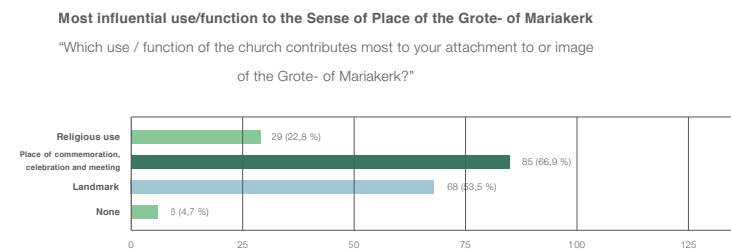
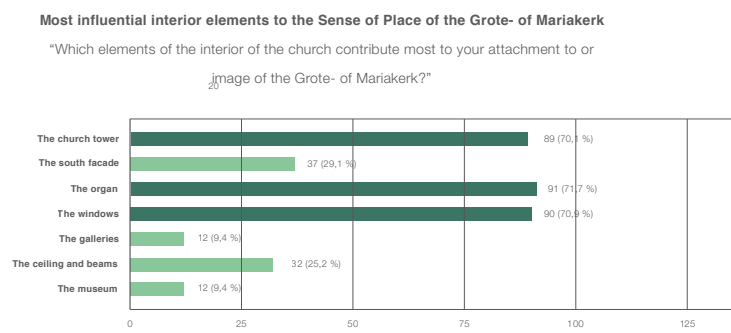
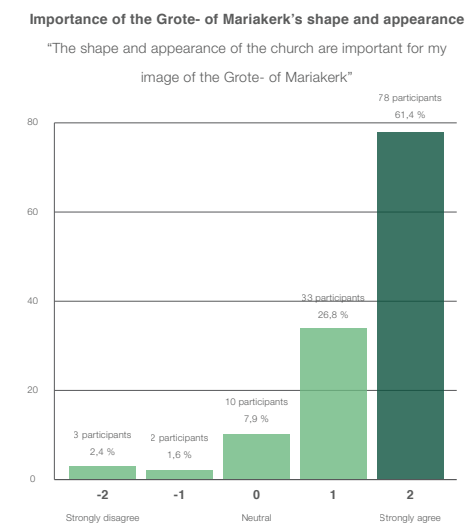
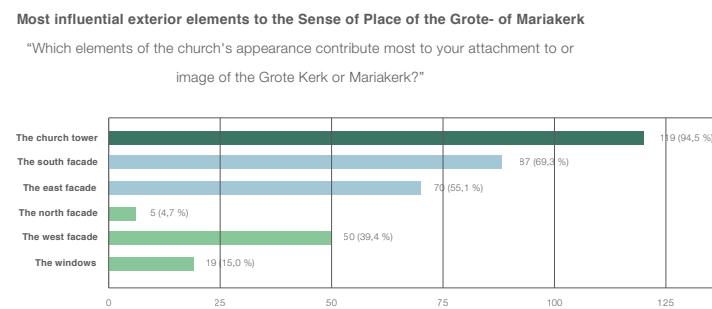
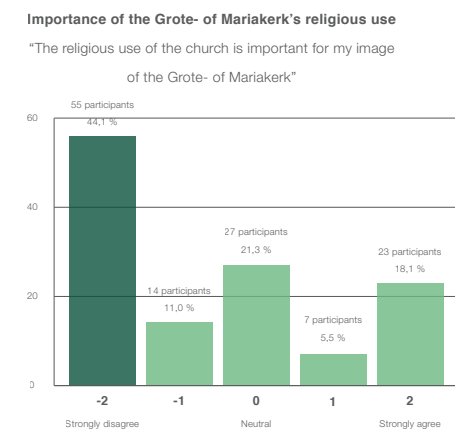


Figure 11 - General results showing how the participants answered the questionnaire - (own work)

As mentioned before, and shown by figure 12, the general results and emotional bond with the Grote- of Mariakerk are positive, showing that the residents care for the building, and are mainly focussed on the church's exterior appearance and its use as a place of commemoration, celebration and meeting. Most of the residents, apart from some churchgoers, do not care enough for the building to sacrifice for it and they do not necessarily feel that the religious use of the church building is necessary for its Sense of Place.

These differences in Sense of Place and perception of the church are shown by the different results between the non-churchgoers, sometimes-churchgoers, and active churchgoers, as shown in figure 12. Among the age groups and places of residency is a logical division. Logically, the churchgoer's main interaction with the building is true the ceremonies and the non-churchgoers as a landmark. Surprisingly, however, is that the sometimes-churchgoers mostly interact with the building as a place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting. This function is also the binding factor between the groups. The main differences between the groups are in the emotional bond they have with the Grote- of Mariakerk. While they all have a positive connection with the building, as shown in figure 12. The churchgoers have a very positive connection with the building, especially the sometimes-churchgoers who seem to feel very strongly about the building. Logically, the non-churchgoers have a somewhat moderate emotional connection with the building, as they probably have had fewer memories and moments of use with the church. This difference also shows in the participant's willingness to sacrifice towards maintaining the church, as the churchgoers are willing to do so and the non-churchgoers are neutral towards the statement. Furthermore, as expected, only the active churchgoers care about the religious use of the building, and all the groups care for the appearance and history of the Grote- of Mariakerk. Striking is that the results of the sometimes-churchgoers seem to be 'stronger', however, this could be due to the small sample size. All

the participants care for the same building elements, as shown in figure 12, with only the churchgoer's additional care for the west facade and the active churchgoers' care for the interior religious objects as deviating results. The results show that the more active the participants are in practicing their religion, the more the use of the church becomes important for their emotional connection with the building. So, while all the participants have a positive Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk, the non-churchgoers are in the more moderate levels of Sense of Place and the churchgoers in the higher levels of Sense of Place, as kind of was to be expected.

Aside from religious participation, there are also differences between the results of the age groups. By checking between the two largest groups of participants '<18 - 55' and '55 - 65+', these differences were investigated. As expected, the older participants have a higher amount of active churchgoers than the younger participants. This also shows in the type of interaction with the Grote- of Mariakerk, since the participants between '<18 - 55' predominantly interact with the church as a landmark and the participants of '55 - 65+' mostly as a place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting. Interesting, is that while both groups have a positive attitude and emotional bond with the Grote- of Mariakerk, the emotional bond of the '55 - 65+' participants is much stronger (very positive) compared to that of the '<18 - 55' participants (positive), as shown in figure 12. This is probably a result of the fact that both the church as an institution and the Grote- of Mariakerk were much more prominent aspects of the lives of the '55 - 65+' participants. Especially considering the decrease in churchgoers and religious participation over the last couple of decennia. While most of the other results show to be the same between both groups, there is a difference in what aspects of the building the groups see as influential to their perception of the Grote- of Mariakerk. The younger '<18 - 55' participants care more about the appearance of the church and less about its religious use. Whereas it is the older '55 -



65+’ participants care a bit less about the appearance and a bit more about the religious use of the church, as shown by figure 12. Both age groups regard the same exterior and interior building elements as important to their perception and bond with the Grote- of Mariakerk, with only some slight differences in the order of the elements. Concerning the use of the building, however, the responses are a bit different. While the younger ‘<18 - 55’ participants care for the building as both a landmark and place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting. The older ‘55 - 65+’ participants predominantly care for the building as a place of commemoration, celebration, and meeting. This is also reflected in the aspects that they find most important to their Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk, as the younger ‘<18 - 55’ participants solely care for the exterior appearance of the building and the older ‘55 - 65+’ participants care for both the use and exterior appearance of the Grote- of Mariakerk. The main takeaway from this investigation is that the younger residents of Meppel have a more moderate level of Sense of Place and the older residents have a much higher level of Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk.

**Conversation with Leo Tadema and Kor van Gijssel (active churchgoers)**

In addition to the questionnaire, some in-depth interviews/ conversations to provide some more insight into the responses to questions. Of course, all the interviewed people participated in the questionnaire, but the conversation could act as a way of providing more nuance to the quite black-and-white answers the questionnaire provides in some cases. During the talk with Leo Tadema and Kor van Gijssel, the scribe, and chairman of the church council, some specific questions were asked and other points of conversation arose spontaneously. The results and questions asked during the conversation with Leo Tadema and Kor van Gijssel are presented below.

*Are there a lot of visitors or attention from outside Meppel towards the Grote or Mariakerk?*

There are close to no visitors from outside of Meppel to visit the church ceremonies. In the case of events, gatherings, or celebrations this is different. Those draw visitors from outside of Meppel, however, they visit the Ogterop theater instead of the Grote- of Mariakerk. Most of the visitors to the church building are from within Meppel. The residents of Meppel predominately stay in Meppel.

*Many of the participants interacted with and appreciate the Grote- of Mariakerk highly as a place of gathering, celebration, and meeting, how come?*

Throughout the years the church has been used as a venue for galas, organ concerts, museum space, expositions, and gatherings. So, possibly, many people have interacted with the church through one of these events. This would explain the appreciation for the church as a place of gathering, celebration, and meeting.

*It looks like many of the participants are not willing to invest in maintaining the church but do not want to see it demolished, did the residents of Meppel have the opportunity to contribute time or ideas for repurposing?*

Two foundations have been set up that try to preserve the Grote- of Mariakerk. ‘*Stichting Grote- of Mariakerk*’ has done and is doing research into possible plans for the church and ‘*Stichting vrienden van de Grote- of Mariakerk*’ is a foundation that collects money for the maintenance of the church building. Aside from the foundations, there is research from XPEX that focuses on the repurposing of the church. During their research, they sat down with the stakeholders, policymakers, and the church board. While the ‘normal person on the streets’ might has been missed in their research, a broad variety of people did have an opportunity to provide input towards the repurposing. So, the opportunity is there for people to invest time or money towards maintaining the church. The churchgoers feel like its unwillingness from the Meppelers to invest, another reason could also be

Results from the Questionnaire for measuring the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk

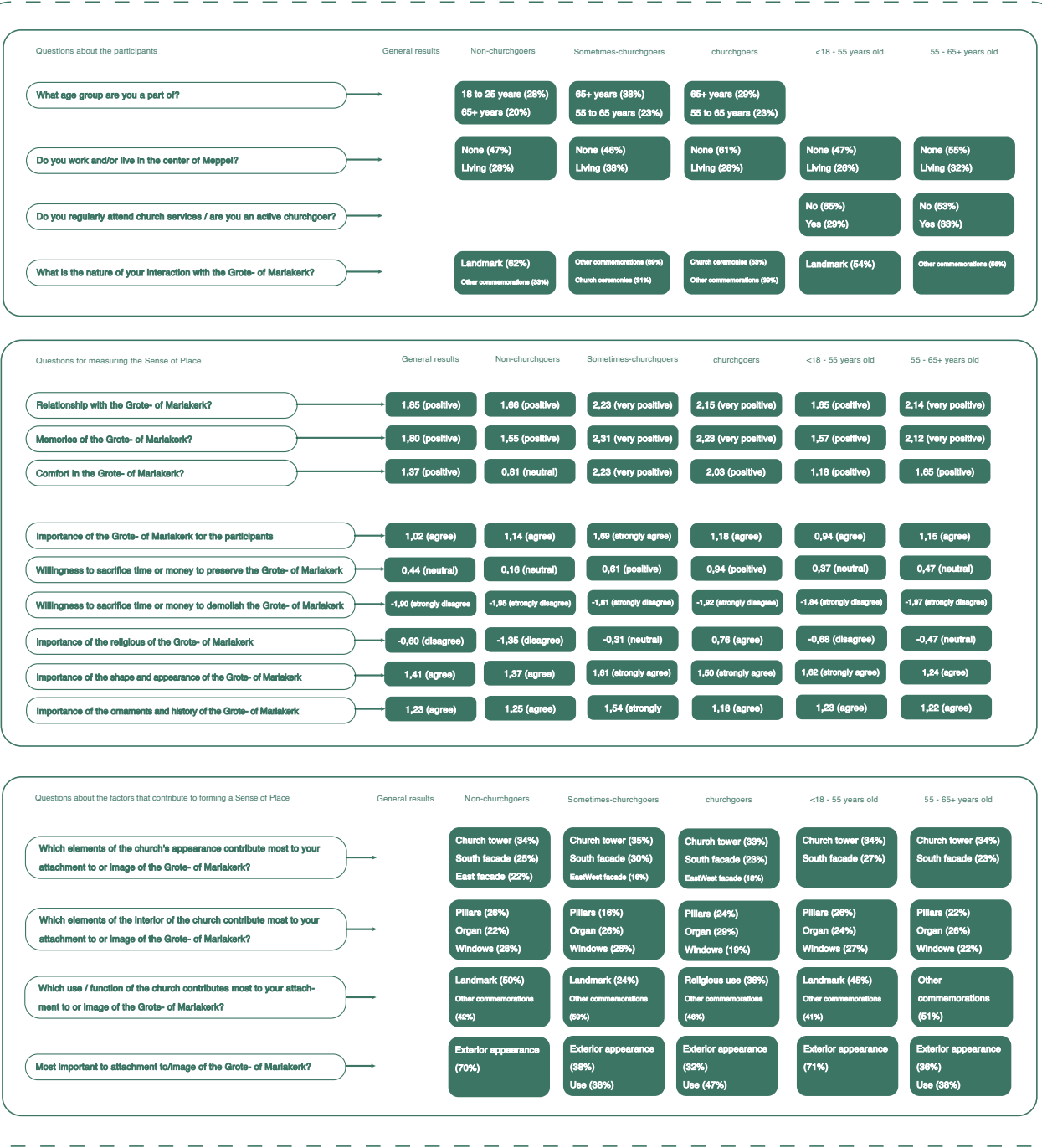


Figure 12 - The average responses between the different sub-groups of participants - (own work)



that they do not trust or have seen enough of the plans.

*The exterior appearance of the church is seen by the participants as most influential to their connection with and perception of the Grote- of Mariakerk, is that a logical result?*

Yes, as expected the exterior is the most visible and known to most people, so it speaks most to people's imagination if you ask them about the church. People walk by, stop for a minute, and are in awe of how beautiful the church is. So, yes, it is very logical that generally the exterior appearance is seen as most important.

*Unexpectedly, to me at least, the south facade was rated very highly, even above the characteristic classic east facade, how come?*

The south facade has a visual connection with the church square, which means that the south facade is much more visible, despite the row of trees. It is also much more in line with the style of the rest of the church. Furthermore, Leo and Kor found the east facade to be hideous, as it does not fit with the rest of the church and looks like a facade that belongs to a different building. The east facade is also less visible than the south facade. So, the south facade speaks much more to the participants as part of the church.

*The organ is seen as a very important interior element, why? Is that only due to its appearance and monumental value or is it also rated highly as an object of use?*

First and foremost, people find it to be a beautiful organ, almost a piece of art. While it is mainly appreciated as an object, there have been organ concerts, so by some, it is appreciated as an instrument. Furthermore, it is a very old monument that belongs as a part of the church.

*As an outsider, and based on preliminary research and the questionnaire, the Grote- of Mariakerk looks like an icon for the city of Meppel, is that the right assumption?*

As might have already been noticed by social media or newspaper postings, the Grote- of Mariakerk is a lively point of discussion. Furthermore, there is a shared communal love for the church building. The church is the geographical heart of Meppel and historically was the hearth of city life. So, yes, as far as they were concerned, the Grote- of Mariakerk is an icon for Meppel.

#### **Conversation with Stichting Oud Meppel**

Next to the conversation with Leo Tadema and Kor van Gijssel, the foundation 'Stichting Oud Meppel' was also approached for an interview/conversation. At the office/archive building of the foundation, an interview was conducted with Herman Jansen, the old chair of the foundation, a historian, and an old alderman of culture in Meppel. Just like during the conversation with Leo and Kor, Herman was asked some specific questions and some other topics were touched upon as well. The results and questions asked during the conversation with Herman Jansen are presented below.

*Within the questionnaire people were asked if they live or work in the city center of Meppel (field of vision of the church), to see if there were differences between how the groups experienced the church. However, there did not seem to be any differences, do you possibly have an explanation for this?*

Partially as a result of the scale of Meppel, people see the city center and area outside of it as the same. Also, due to the city expansion, there was a lot of moving by the residents between the city center and the outskirts of Meppel. So, some people might have experienced both. Furthermore, the outskirts of Meppel have a strong feeling towards the tower of the Grote-

of Mariakerk, as it is a landmark for Meppel, a reference point. Even so much that when new building projects blocked the vision of the church, people started complaining.

*Interesting, is that even among the non-churchgoers, the Grote- of Mariakerk is highly interacted with and appreciated as a place of gathering, celebration, and meeting, how come?*

The Grote- of Mariakerk is undergoing and has undergone the same change in perception as most churches. Swaying away from the perception of the house of god to other ideas, such as a place for weddings, funerals, concerts, or other cultural events. Furthermore, historically, before the separation of church and state, the church was a community house, used for many different functions apart from religious use. That is how I (Herman) would explain the appreciation of the Grote- of Mariakerk as a place of gathering, celebration, and meeting. *It looks like many of the participants are not willing to invest in maintaining the church but do not want to see it demolished, however, there is an opportunity to invest through existing foundations and surveys about the future use of the church. Do you think people simply don't care or maybe do not trust that their time or money is going to be put to good use?*

First of all, there has not been that much of a shock effect yet. Of course, the church has closed, but it is the face of Meppel, it is on every postcard. It will never be demolished. Furthermore, there has not been enough shock or large enough effort to create a fund or something else. If the church was going to be destroyed (or they put an action inside of it), that is the point where people start to act more or come up with great ideas or sums of money. That simply has not happened yet.

*The exterior appearance of the church is seen by the participants as most influential to their connection with and perception of the Grote- of Mariakerk, is that a logical result?*

Yes, both the exterior appearance and the history that it represents are logically most important. The appearance quite literally shows the scars or marks of change that the church has undergone to grow with Meppel. This expansion shows the importance the church has for Meppel and the city's history. So, yes, a logical result.

*Unexpectedly, to me at least, the south facade was rated very highly, even above the characteristic classic east facade, how come?*

Of course, to an architecture student, the east facade is interesting and beautiful. However, too many people, the east facade is not medieval or medieval-looking like the other facades. The east facade looks like most older buildings in Meppel. So, despite it being one of the main entrances, it is less special in that way. Even though (what is strange to most people), it shows the combination of different styles and craftsmanship. The east facade breaks the unity of styles and is 'less a part of the church'. Simply put, the medieval other facades of the church are appreciated more and are more special/unique to the Grote- of Mariakerk for most people.

*The organ is seen as a very important interior element, why? Is that only due to its appearance and monumental value or is it also rated highly as an object of use?*

The organ has been used for many organ concerts or by the music school. So, as an object of use, it is a known and precious object to most (older) people. The church used to be full of people during organ concerts. The organ is also simply beautiful and a 300-year-old national monument. The organ is even very special on a national level, or at least, people like to brag about that.

*As an outsider, and based on preliminary research and the questionnaire, the Grote- of Mariakerk looks like an icon for the city of Meppel, is that the right assumption?*

Yes, absolutely, the church tower is on almost every picture or postcard regarding Meppel, and it's the pride of the city. To many people, predominately the church tower represents the Meppeler feeling. It's at the center of Meppel and is the symbol of the city. Meppel is the Meppeler tower and vice versa.

Disclaimer, at the foundation office, there was an exposition on the Grote- of Mariakerk. There was even a scaled model of just the tower of the Grote- of Mariakerk, not the entire building, just the tower. It even had a small piece of paper saying "do not touch the Meppeler tower!", which I found quite ironic.

#### **Takeaways from XPEX's research**

While the research from XPEX mainly focuses on possible plans for repurposing and will be most useful in the later part of the research. It did provide some pointers concerning the local appreciation of the church. So, considering that XPEX conducted interviews with the different stakeholders, it is safe to say that their research also got a broad idea of the local Sense of Place. In short, the research presents the following broad idea concerning the local view towards the Grote- of Mariakerk:

First of all, to most people, the Grote- of Mariakerk feels like the beating heart of Meppel. The church building is public property that tells the story of Meppel and its residents. Furthermore, the church must remain publicly accessible. The Grote- of Mariakerk is the heart of Meppel, historically and now, the church represents Meppel and Meppel represents the church. (XPEX, 2022)

Appendix C - How do transformation scenarios affect the sense of place of the Grote- of Mariakerk for the local community?

Formulation of the design scenario’s + results of the conducted scenario interviews - sub-question 4

After measuring the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk amongst the target group, it is time to test the limits to which the building can be changed before this Sense of Place is lost or damaged. In other words, this part of the research plays a significant part in defining the limits of acceptable change. As a way of defining these limits, field research is conducted in which the local community of Meppel is questioned about different intervention scenarios concerning the Grote- of Mariakerk. These intervention scenarios, which cover the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk, are presented to the locals in various phases. Yet, before these scenarios can be presented, various steps have to be taken. First and foremost, the possible ways of intervening with the form and function have to be explained, argued, and chosen, otherwise, the options are endless. How can there be intervened with the form of the church and what possible functions are even logical for the Grote- of Mariakerk? After demarcating the options, the scenarios are presented in phases, asking the locals how certain scenarios affect the Grote- of Mariakerk’s Sense of Place throughout the design process. By doing so, reflecting important design decisions with the locals, like the program for the building, what types of extensions are justified or detrimental to the Sense of Place of the

Grote- of Mariakerk, and how the reuse of materials affects the Sense of Place. Of course, there is always a process of elimination done by forehand, as the locals are not designing the building, making the design decisions, or knowing the entire picture. However, allowing them to provide feedback and critique will add an extra layer of data and argumentation to the design process. In the end, this should contribute towards a well-informed design that does not contradict or damage the local’s emotional bond with the Grote- of Mariakerk, fulfills the needs of Meppel, and helps to reinvigorate the church into the day-to-day of Meppel, hopefully, for a long time. Through conducting the field research in these phases, as shown in figure 13, the research question is answered: *“How do transformation scenarios affect the sense of place of the Grote- of Mariakerk for the local community?”*

Scenarios for intervening with the form of the Grote- of Mariakerk

Before any scenarios for intervening with the form of the building can be made, an understanding needs to be present of the available options. Of course, the design possibilities are endless. This is why some theories could help support the early parts of the design process and create the scenarios. Hence, why, for the form aspect of

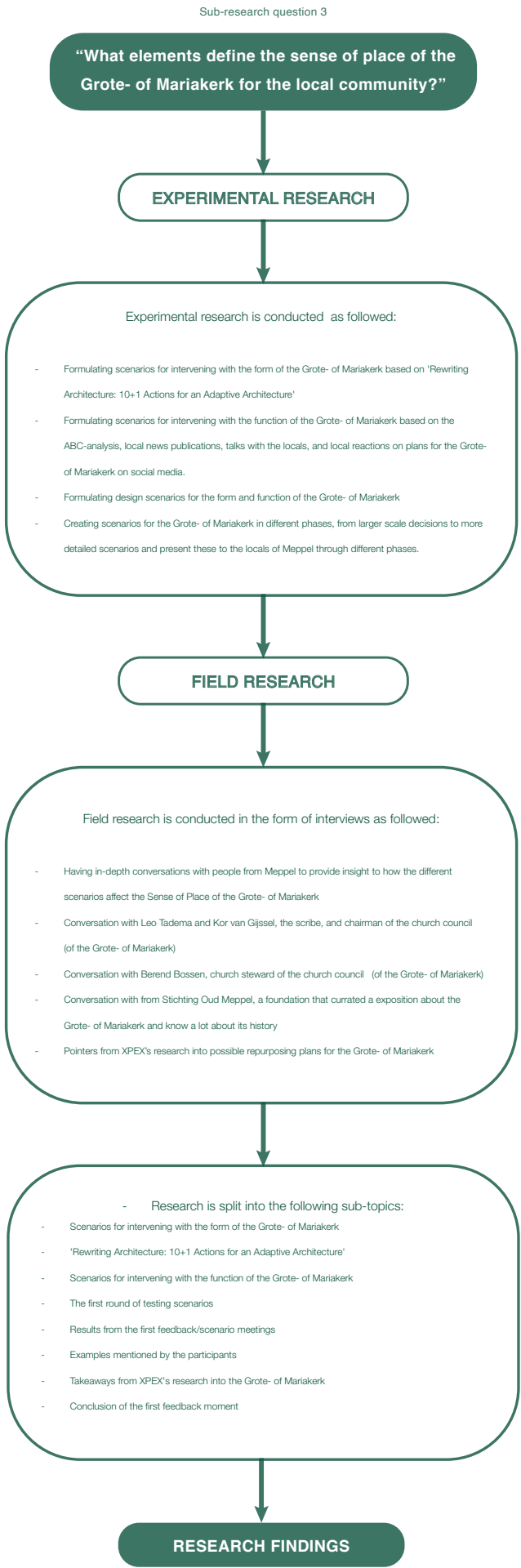


Figure 13 - Methodology scheme for the research into sub-question 4 - own work



the first design scenarios, Alkemade et al.'s (2021) book *'Rewriting Architecture: 10+1 Actions for an Adaptive Architecture'* is used as a framework for defining the interventions with the form of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

### 'Rewriting Architecture: 10+1 Actions for an Adaptive Architecture'

As the title already reveals, Alkemade et al.'s (2021) book describes 11 ways for intervening with existing architecture or heritage buildings. This provides an excellent framework for the design scenarios regarding the form of the building. However, before choosing what design scenarios could be applied on the Grote- of Mariakerk, there needs to be an idea of what these *10+1 Actions* actually are. What are the scenarios about in the first place, how are they executed, what goals do they pursue, and are they even viable for the situation of the Grote- of Mariakerk? All relevant questions that have to be answered before picking a design scenario. This is why each of the *10+1 actions* is shortly highlighted to see what they are even about.



Figure 14 - Vylder Vinck's *Twiggy* and RAAAF's *hardcore heritage* - (Wilkinson, 2021) (Artemel, 2017)

*Elimination* is a radical, but often forgotten design instrument in architecture that can be used to highlight or create new spatial qualities. By removing elements, hidden qualities of a building are possibly brought to light. Especially considering the current material crisis, this tool of creative removal could prove to be an excellent design tool for reinterpreting buildings and saving materials (Alkemade et al., 2021). Examples of this approach to heritage, as shown in figure 14, are RAAAF's *Hardcore heritage* or Vylder Vinck Taillue's *Twiggy* in Gent. By either removing, excavating, erasing, or altering buildings, an imagination-based approach is used to create new spatial qualities. (Alkemade et al., 2021)

*Continue - Comma instead of a full stop* is an approach where the building's inherent qualities are continued. Architecture is mostly based on creating the finished product, whereas, in reality, the building is the start, not the end. Some buildings contain eternal qualities, but most buildings themselves aren't eternal (Alkemade et al., 2021). Buildings are always adapting and moving forward from the original, this isn't a weakness, but shows the evolutionary process of a building and the way of thinking at that time (Alkemade et al., 2021). Furthermore, it could be a tool used to create architecture that grows. So, building a plateau that later generations

can build from, like the houses in Mumbai. (Alkemade et al., 2021)

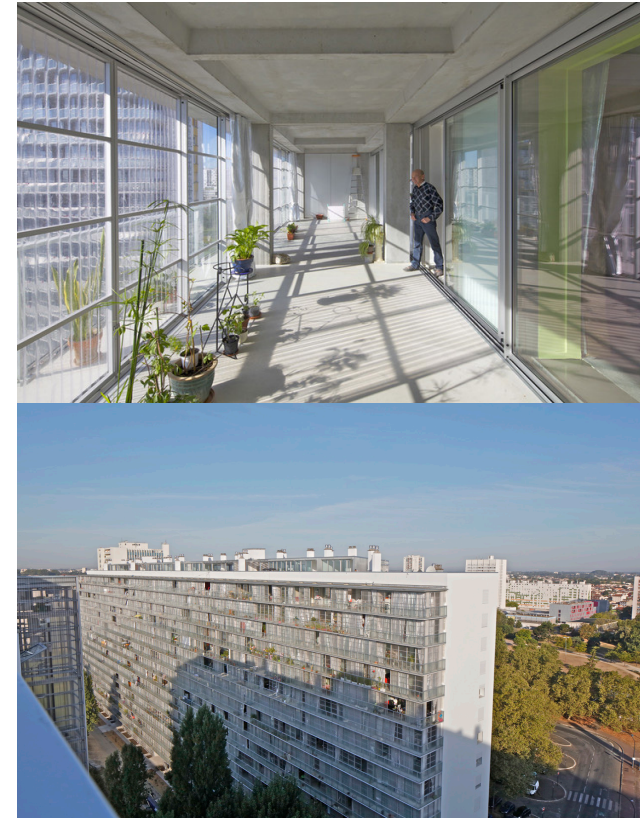


Figure 15 - Lacaton & Vassal *Frederic Druot* - (Pintos, 2021)

*Obscure-hiding qualities* is similar to elimination, a tool that can be used to show the hidden qualities of a building, however, much more subtle. Most of the time when an old build is breaking down and in need of renewal, it is remade in the same style or renovated. To some, this is a lie (Alkemade et al., 2021). By showing the raw structure of the building, instead of covering it up again. The hidden qualities behind the facades, structures, and organization types within the building, could provide new spatial qualities (Alkemade et al., 2021)! Aside from the physical structure, this can also regard the proverbial and cultural structures of a place. By hiding new things inside of the old and opening up the inside, the unseen beauty of a place can be shown! (Alkemade et al., 2021)

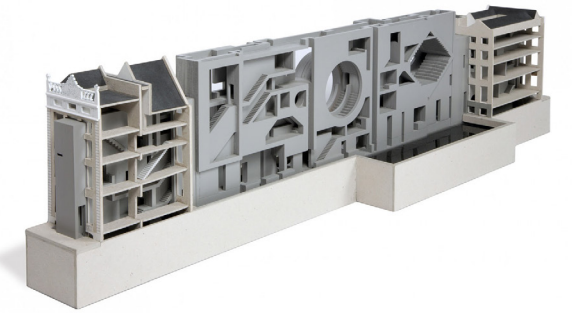


Figure 16 - *Achterhuis*, a place to hide for Edward Snowden - (Archined, 2020)

*Reconfigure - the whole and its parts*, is not so much a rigorous tool but can be a subtle one. Permanent fixes open the door to permanent failures. New buildings are usually built for a set function or purpose, it is glued together as a whole, but what if that function is not needed anymore (Alkemade et al., 2021)? The reuse, repurposing, or use of leftover materials is found all over the entire world, and opens the door to new types of creative design, as is already common in fashion and music (Alkemade et al., 2021). In the current times, reuse and reconfiguration of existing materials could provide more sustainable and flexible architecture! "Recycling boils down to downcycling while entropy and loss of value are accelerated". (Alkemade et al., 2021)

*Repurpose - from the inside out* is a way of intervention where minimizing spatial intervention is done. Instead, by creatively reinterpreting and reactivating the use and value of the existing spaces a new purpose is given to the building (Alkemade et al., 2021). With minimal intervention, old factories, schools, offices, and unused buildings, in general, can be given new life and maintained within the current building stock. By doing so, also keeping their heritage values alive and finding beauty in the unutilized spaces, redefining the architecture itself. (Alkemade et al., 2021)





Figure 17 - Shangwei Village Plugin House / People's Architecture Office - (Yuekang, 2019)

*Densify - expand inwards* is a way of intervention where there isn't reached outside of the building, but new space is created inwards. With an ever-growing population, many new houses, offices, schools, etc. need to be developed. This is mainly done by adding new components to cities, and by compromising nature and open areas (Alkemade et al., 2021). An alternative could be inward expansion, a crucial one, as building on top, in between, and behind existing buildings could provide a way of enhancing places and their spatial conditions (Alkemade et al., 2021). Apart from building inward, making more efficient use of the space is also a way of densifying inwards. By densifying inward, it could help create an environment where our living space is not determined by quantity, but by the quality of the square meters. (Alkemade et al., 2021)



Figure 18 - FRAC, Dunkirk, Lacaton & Vassal - (Aguilar, 2021)

*Copy - building on blueprints* is a way of intervention that doesn't incline the architect to reinvent the wheel. Architecture sometimes seems to feel inclined to give different answers to the same question. Copying is seen as suspicious behavior. Despite the blueprints for a good solution already being there (Alkemade et al., 2021). Originality is important, but not the goal, as efficiency and sustainability are just as important. Copying is not uncommon in arts and industry. So, why should it be uncommon in architecture? Quotes like *"It's not what you steal, it's the way you steal it"* (Alkemade et al., 2021), shouldn't be seen as strange, as copying can also be seen as a way of building on top of the existing and viable knowledge of those before. (Alkemade et al., 2021)



Figure 19 - taturu atzu: the garden which is the nearest to god - (taturu atzu: the garden which is the nearest to god, z.d.)

*Overlay - symbiotic spaces*, How can existing spatial structures be overlaid with new ones in a way that each layer benefits from the other? (Alkemade et al., 2021) Usually, in architecture, the old make a place for the new. Resulting in a loss of identity, materials, history, and functionality. This is a pity, as the reuse of the same space could result in refund, new, or extra value and appreciation of the old by creating a new one. The combination of new and old ideas could reinvent the existing space by reinvigorating it. (Alkemade et al., 2021)

*Reimagine - look again*, Design is a mirror of personal perception. In reality, each project is a designer's outlook on architecture, urbanism, and life itself. Their preferences, ideas, and biases are all present in their projects (Alkemade et al., 2021). While this is part of the artistic aspect of architecture, it is, however, an excluding type of design, as someone's perspective doesn't apply to everyone (Alkemade et al., 2021). Architecture is meant for a large variety of people. So, various stories should be present in the design process and the eventual design, to fill the gaps architects cannot fill themselves. By doing so, providing a richer story and change the reality of our design by merely changing our viewpoint. "Give up your technical attitude and try to understand the person for whom you are creating something". (Alkemade et al., 2021)

*(Re)start - over and over and over*, as a result of evolution organisms flourish and perish. The same is true for cultural development and architecture. Not all change is foreseen and sometimes systems fail, which sometimes leaves no other option than the start over, a complete reset (Alkemade et al., 2021). Restarting is about using the knowledge that was before and searching for or incorporating new knowledge. Through palimpsest or starting over, creating new architectural forms and social structures (Alkemade et al., 2021). In other words, removing the existing or building over it. (Alkemade et al., 2021)

*Abstain - active passivity*, Architects are trained to design new things, born to build. However, a new addition or intervention does not always improve the situation. Sometimes a radical mind shift is needed to move forward. A new way could be to abstain from addition (Alkemade et al., 2021). Since the act of building creates desires, the lack of any could liberate us, designing with an active hands-off approach. Could we redefine a space, by doing nothing (Alkemade et al., 2021)? While this might not be feasible in all aspects of design. It could be a way of thinking that can be incorporated into the design process,

can we create a blank canvas, instead of the finished article? (Alkemade et al., 2021)

While all of Alkemade et al.'s (2021) 10+1 Actions for an Adaptive Architecture provide inspiration, interesting viewpoints, and tools for design. The reality is that some of them seem very similar, aren't all tools for "visible" large-scale intervention, and simply aren't viable for this specific first part of the research. Some of the actions like 'Repurpose - from the inside out' or 'Reconfigure - the whole and its parts' are going to be present in the final design and throughout the scenarios, due to the Zero-Waste nature of the design assignment. Other actions like 'Abstain - active passivity', are simply not fit for the earlier scenario phases or the situation of the Grote- of Mariakerk. This is why for the (first) design scenarios only a couple of the actions are used for the field research. The actions for intervention that fit the first part of the field research, where questions are asked about 'bigger' or 'more present design decisions' are: 'Elimination', 'Continue - Comma instead of a full stop', 'Obscure-hiding qualities', 'Densify - expand inwards', 'Copy - building on blueprints', and 'Overlay - symbiotic spaces'.

### Scenarios for Intervening with the function of the Grote- of Marlakerk

Aside from the form, the first phase of presenting design scenarios also includes the possible new functions for the Grote Kerk or Mariakerk. Yet, before these scenarios for the functions can be presented. The possibilities have to be demarcated, otherwise, the options are endless. To limit the possibilities, certain questions have to be answered, like what needs are there in Meppel in general, what needs are there around the church square, and what wishes are present in the local community. The possible types of programs are defined based on the needs of Meppel and the Church square regarding the existing stock of functions and the local wishes and doom scenarios regarding the Grote- of Mariakerk's future use. Of course, there are the financial problems, monumental status, and the church's Sense of Place that all have to be



Figure 20 - the existing facilities in Meppel - (own work)

but these design questions/problems won't walk away. Aside from the fact that these are questions for the architect, I also want to present options to the participants with an open and fresh view during the first moment of testing scenarios. Maybe, incorporating some 'out of the box', 'unrealistic', or 'unlikely' ideas could provide the necessary inspiration for the participants and me to express other ideas during the feedback moments. Ideas, that could hopefully provide new insights towards the Grote- of Mariakerk or design process. After defining these functions through the ABC-analysis, local news publications, talks with the locals, and local reactions on

plans for the Grote- of Mariakerk on social media, the medium for presenting the first design ideas can be discussed.

When looking at the ABC-analysis, two specific site analyses stand out regarding possible future use for the Grote- of Mariakerk. First and foremost, the analyses of the existing functions in Meppel stand out. As shown in figures 20 and 21, there is no (substantial) shortage of housing, industry, retail, or office spaces. There is, however, a shortage of places for recreation, nature, and gathering. Furthermore, around the church square, there is a large amount of catering. Aside

from the Function analysis, figure 22 also indicates there is a shortage of 'useable' greenery. So, based on the ABC-analysis, Meppel needs recreational functions, places for gathering, and more active greenery. Regarding the need for greenery, this could imply something like an indoor park in the church, as more greenery usually helps create comfortable public places. The need for recreational functions and places for gathering, however, remains quite vague. In Meppel there is a shortage of Museums, as there are 2 relatively small museums, and mostly home-owned art galleries (personal spaces). Aside from the local theater, there isn't any location that functions as a concert hall. This point is emphasized when searching for locally scheduled concerts, as you will then mainly be referred to Zwolle or Hoogeveen. Regarding sports and play in Meppel, there are more than enough facilities like a bowling alley, laser gaming, an escape room, a swimming pool, and kid-playing paradises. While Meppel has places for gathering, like the library, church square, or bars, there maybe would be a need for larger spaces. So, apart from greenery, there is a need for recreational facilities for the mature public in the form of museums or concert halls that also facilitate other forms of gathering.

Aside from the necessities of Meppel based on the existing building stock, there are also possible plans for the Grote- of Mariakerk posted in local news publications. What is interesting about these plans, is not necessarily the plans themselves, but the local opinion regarding the plans. Interesting, however, is that thus far, only a single plan or type of plan has been presented for the church. RTV Meppel, The Meppeler courant, and other publications all shared the plans to turn the Grote- of Mariakerk into a library 2.0, an urban living room. A place open 6 to 7 days a week where people can gather, read, visit concerts, lectures, and facilitates places to work for students. Locally, the people hope for a plan like the church in Zwolle or Maastricht, in other words, a glorified bookshop. While these functions are usually a great success, some local whispers share some doubt about the idea. There already are enough bookshops, but the plan doesn't generate enough income to fill the budget shortage, and will it even be used in the first place? Nevertheless, it is a solid plan, and it usually works out quite well, which means the church can largely be maintained as is and provides somewhat of a local hotspot/attraction. It does, however, spark one question in my mind, couldn't a local icon such as the Grote- of Mariakerk not provide more? Both from

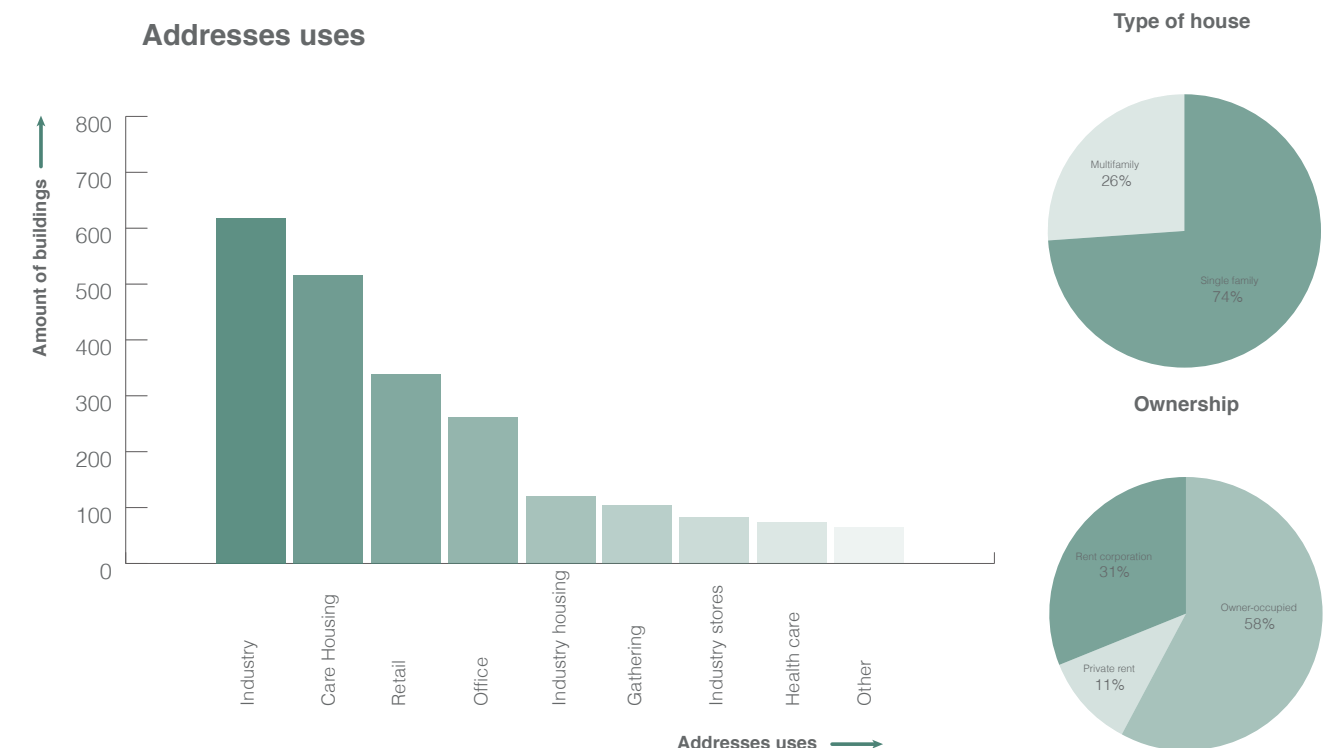


Figure 21 - the existing facilities in Meppel - (own work with data from (AlleCijfers.nl, 2022))



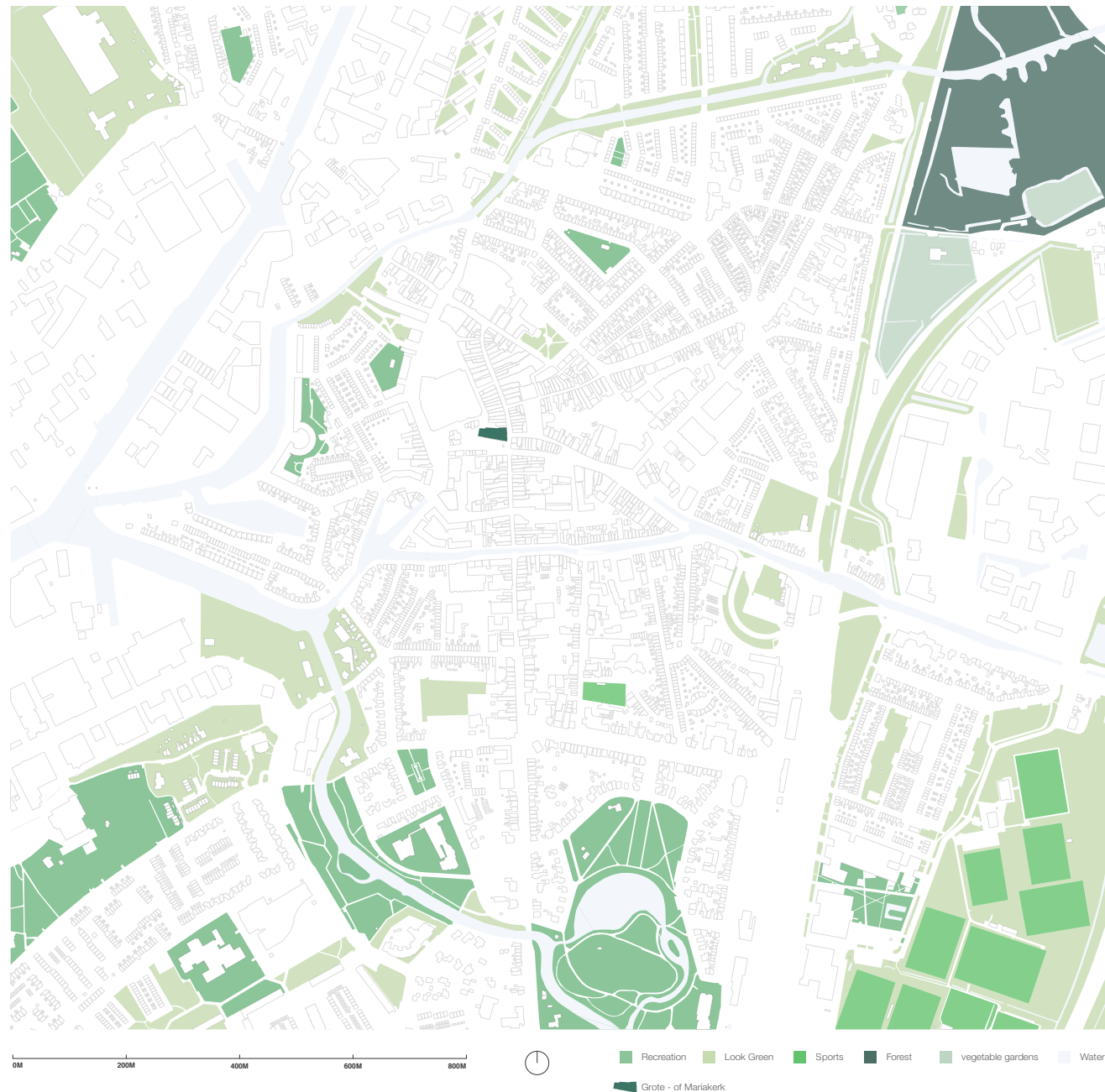


Figure 22 - the existing Greenery in Meppel - (own work)

an architectural and program viewpoint.

Next to the maybe baseless wish for the urban living room/library in the Grote- of Mariakerk, the local community also has its wishes and doom scenarios regarding plans for the church. First and foremost, there is a local hate campaign against the idea of housing in the church. This is made quite clear when reading the local newspapers or when interacting with the local community. Despite the local disgust, it is an interesting case, because is there so much opposition to the idea of housing, and does a similar function like a hotel spark the same anger? Aside from being warm to the idea of a library, the locals mostly

hope to see a cultural repurposing of the Grote- of Mariakerk, something like a concert hall. One of the reasons behind this wish is that for the last couple of years, the church was already used as a concert hall for the local choir. Most of all, the locals hope to make the church a lively part of the city, other ideas like pop-up stores or flexible workspaces have also been mentioned among the locals.

So, based on the (ABC-analysis) needs of Meppel, existing whispers for plans (local news publications), and the local wishes and doom scenarios, 6 functions seem to be suitable for the future of the church. Hence, why during the first feedback

moment with the participants, an 'inside' park, library/bookshop, concert hall, housing, hotel, museum, and possible combination of these functions are discussed as program scenarios for the Grote- of Mariakerk. As a result, a better understanding is created of what functions the locals of Meppel deem fit for the Grote- of Mariakerk, why that is the case, and how the different types of programs influence their Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk.

### The first round of testing scenarios

During the first round of testing scenarios, the goal (if this was not clear already) is to discuss the more large-scale design decisions with the locals of Meppel. The things that will have a lasting effect on the course of the design process, like the program of the building, large-scale form interventions, and how these affect the perceptions or local ideas of the Grote- of Mariakerk. It is important to know if certain design directions are out of the question if there are preferences, and what types of dreams or necessities the participants have. Since it helps to make decisions from both an objective and emotional perspective and could inspire design decisions later, like, if for example, ancillary functions are added to the general program or to make low-key references with the design. However, first and foremost, it needs to be determined how are these scenarios going to be presented. Just asking them what they think about an extension or library program is not enough. Supporting visual content needs to be present to spark, inspire, or lead the discussion. How will the earlier discussed from and functions scenarios/interventions be discussed?

First and foremost, the design ideas need to be presented in an easy-going fashion and should not take too much time to produce, as most of the content won't be used later on anyway. Secondly, the participants mustn't be distracted by how the 'form interventions' look and spend more time thinking about how they work. This is of course a lot to ask from the participants, especially if design interventions projected on the Grote- of Mariakerk are presented. Furthermore, it takes a lot of time to make visual or physical products that represent the ambiance and atmosphere that you would want to reproduce or create with the types of program, at least, too much time for me (1 student).

Hence, why for this first feedback moment a combination of references (that use the form interventions and show use) and sketch-level floorplans and sections are presented (to show where the program would be placed) to support and streamline the discussions with the participants. The chosen references represent mainly the program in combination with one of the 6 chosen *actions for rewriting architecture*, the content used during the first meetings is shown in the figures on the following pages. An important note is that the main focus was on discussing the program during the first meetings. The program scenarios for the Grote- of Mariakerk required more input and feedback at this moment. Furthermore, it is difficult to discuss all the requirements, monumental values, environmental influences, and sometimes even concepts of the design with 'non-architects' in general, and now even more because, well, there isn't any design yet, just ideas. So, while the intervention scenarios will be discussed and the participant's ideas about the influence on the Sense of Place, preferences, and biases are very valuable and will be incorporated into the design, the priority lies with the program scenarios during the first feedback moment.

### Results from the first feedback/scenario meetings

During the first moment of reflecting and discussing design ideas about the Grote- of Mariakerk with the locals and how they influence the church's Sense of Place, the following people were approached: Leo Tadema, Kor van Gijssel, Berend Bossen, and Herman Jansen. Leo, Kor, and Herman were spoken to in person, and Berend Bossen was by phone. Furthermore, the existing research by XPEX was informed to see what requirements they found for the repurposing of the Grote- of Mariakerk. The results and main takeaways from the conversations are discussed per design scenario, afterward the research from XPEX is addressed, and finally, some spontaneous results like examples of repurposed churches addressed by the participants are mentioned. By doing so, create an understanding of how these interventions influence the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk and which of the scenarios are deemed as good fits for the repurposing by the locals of Meppel.



Figure 23 - the products presented for the library scenario - (Noorata, 2016) (Waanders in de Broeren - Zwolle, 2021)

#### Library + Obscure - hiding qualities

The function of a library or bookshop was possibly the most well-received among all the different scenarios. Of course, it helps that the Broerenkerk bookshop in Zwolle is close by, so people had a good frame of reference. The surprising, yet, not so surprising, was that all the aspects the participants liked about the library scenario had nothing to do with books or the library function. Even going as far as that during the conversation with *Herman*, he concluded that people don't want a library, but a bookstore in the Grote- of Mariakerk. Especially considering that currently, people only visit the library to drink a cup of coffee or read a newspaper. The real answer possibly lies somewhere in between the two functions.

People like the homely, public, and flexible character of the libraries (bookshops), a place to grab a coffee, meet

with someone, visit a lecture, or as *Berend* mentioned a couple of times a quiet place for students to work. More than anything, the feeling is that the accessible nature of the libraries/bookstores is very much in line with how a church should be, the feeling that everyone is welcome and can use the building. These aspects were especially appreciated by *Leo and Kor*. In a way, the function would allow the church to remain somewhat of a public property. Furthermore, there is enthusiasm to replace the existing library in Meppel in the church, however, it should be combined with another function. There were some concerns about the financial feasibility of the function, but the idea of a 'living room of the city' very much speaks to the participants. However, if that is provided in the form of a library or a bookstore should still be discussed.

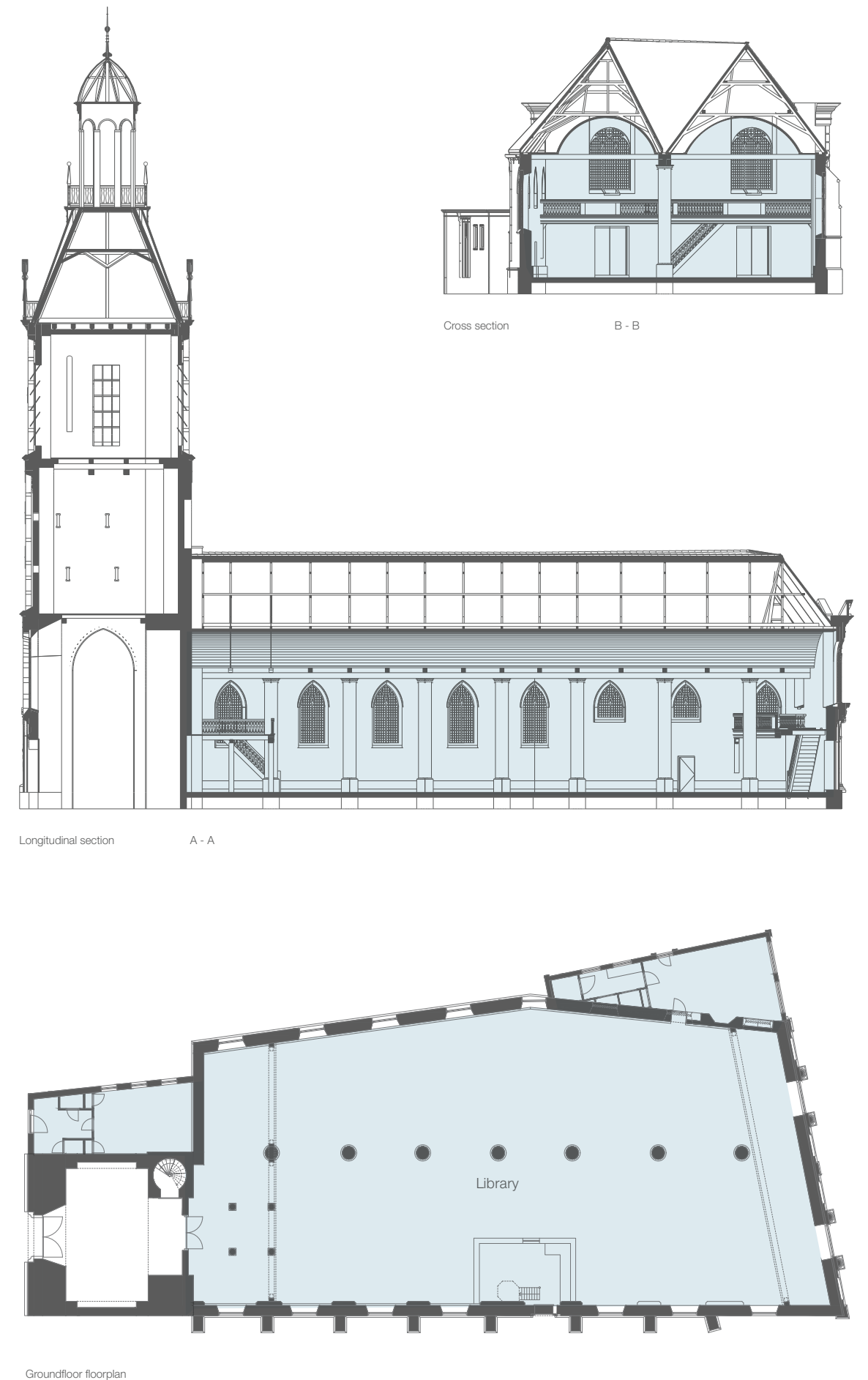


Figure 24 - the products presented for the library scenario - (own work)



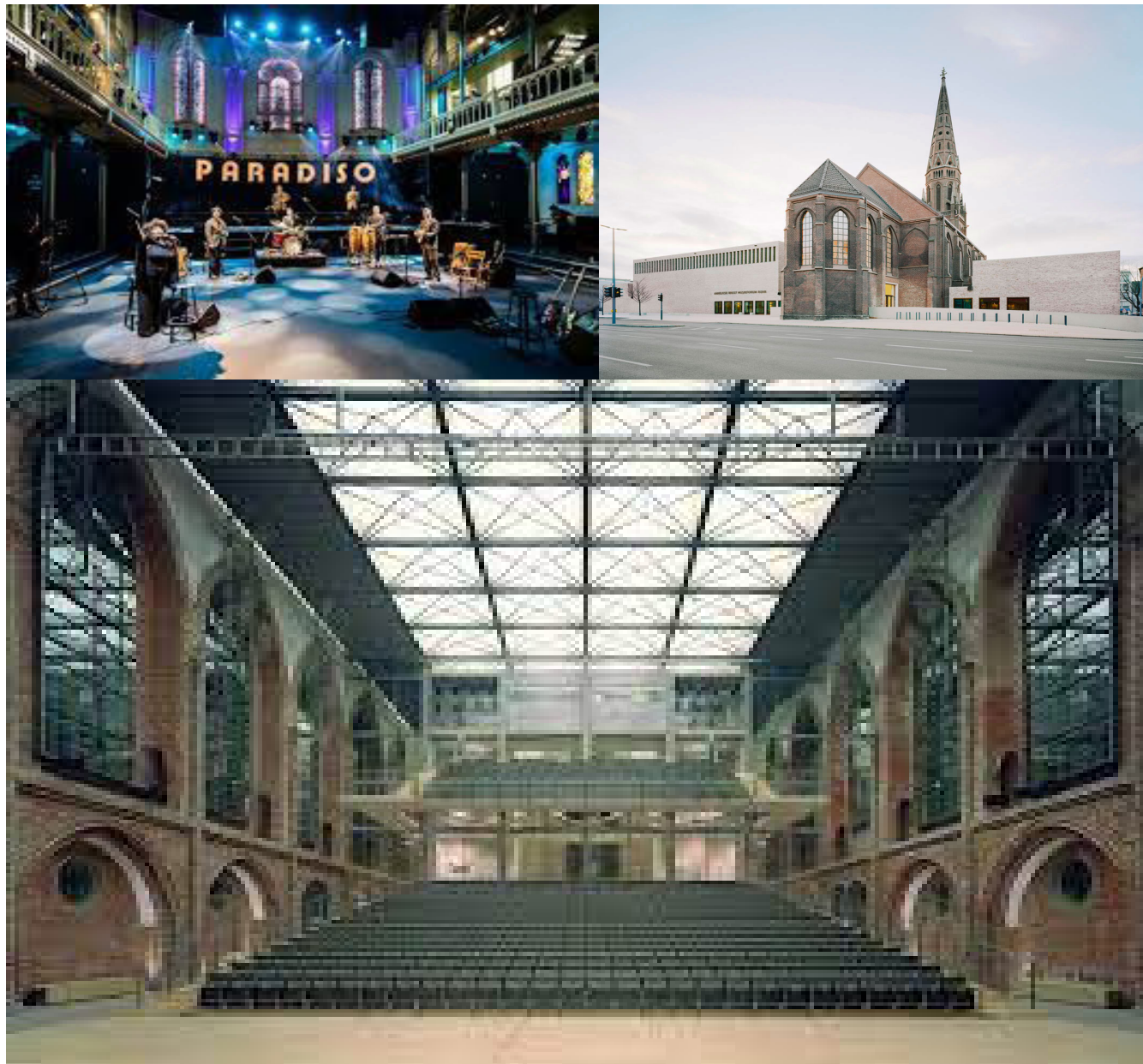


Figure 25 - the products presented for the concert hall scenario - (Acht, 2021) (The orchestra finds a home in a church, 2019) (Marienkirche Concert Hall · Finnish Architecture Navigator, z.d.)

#### Concert hall + Continue - Comma instead of a full stop

A major thing about the library function was that the participants felt that the function should be combined with another function. The function of a concert hall or music venue presented to be the most liked partner to the library. First and foremost, the function is very close to the original use of the Grote- of Mariakerk, as the building was used for organ concerts, music school performances, and even galas. *Leo and Kor* liked the idea because it provides a lively new heart in the church and city center, and the gathering/meeting function of the

church is maintained. Also, as *Herman* mentioned, there are people from different age groups that enjoy visiting the open-air theatre, maybe something that the church could also encapture. There already is a music venue/school in the form of 'Scala', but as *Berend* emphasized, the space provided there isn't flexible and comfortable enough to the liking of the musicians. The space should provide more room for more different types of music. So, there is both a 'need' and a good feeling towards the use as a concert hall, as it honors/does justice to the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

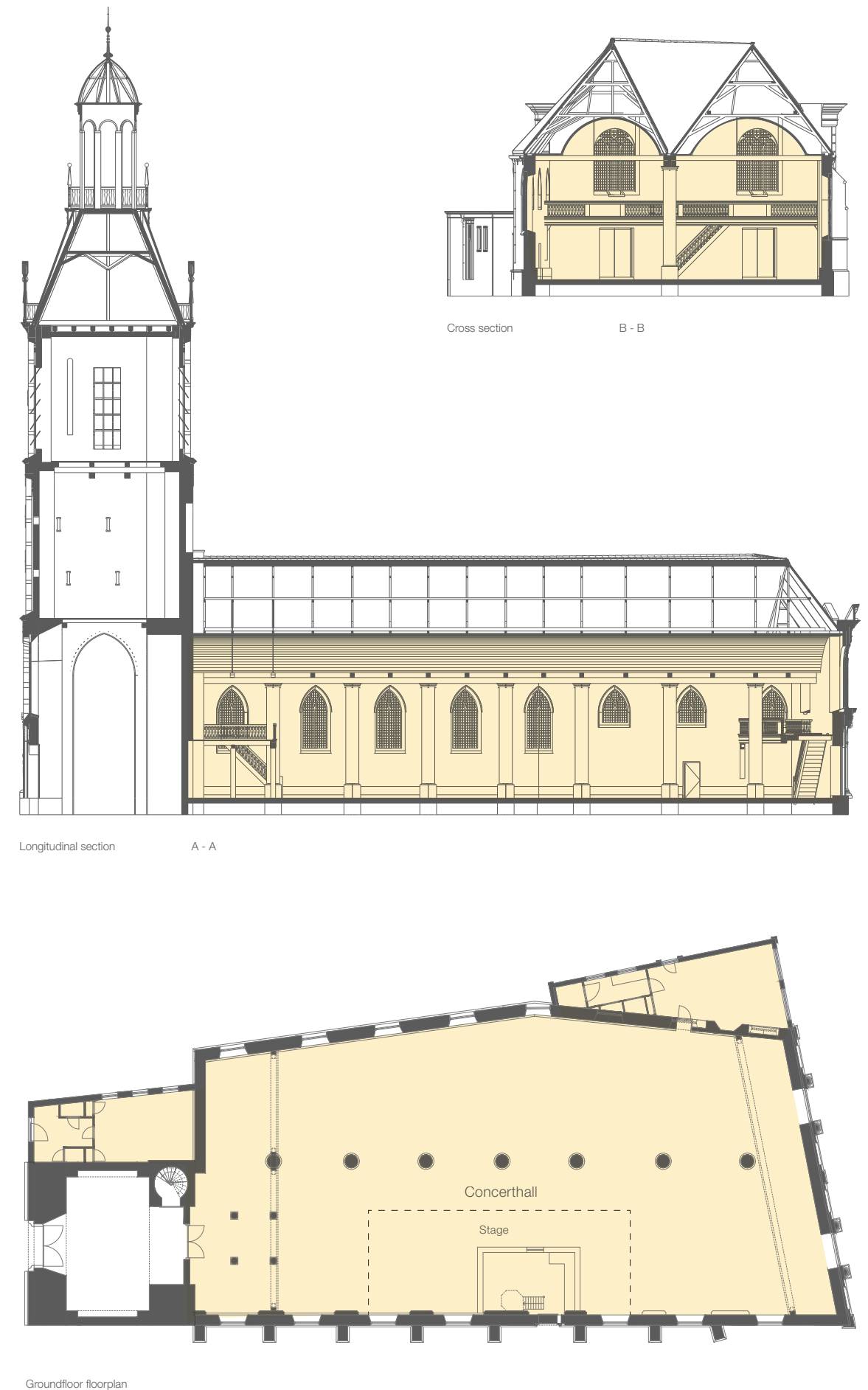


Figure 26 - the products presented for the concert hall scenario - (own work)



Figure 27 - the products presented for the museum scenario - (Museumtijdschrift B.V., 2022) (Thompson, 2019b) (Alarcón, 2022)

#### Museum + Overlay - symbiotic spaces

The museum received possibly the most divergent reactions, as some liked it, others were very enthusiastic, and then there were those who questioned the feasibility and support base for a museum/art gallery space. While generally the consent towards a museum space is positive and the locals of Meppel feel a cultural repurposing is a justified one for the Grote of Mariakerk, there are questions about if enough people would visit. Berend mentioned, that nationally people spend around 27 euros towards culture per person, in Drenthe that is about 17 euros, and in Meppel even lower with 10 euros. So, people aren't culture minded in Meppel, which was

emphasized by *Leo and Kor*. That could, however, also be because the facilities aren't really in Meppel either. The city museum is in an awkward space and isn't very well accessible for wheelchair users and aside from the city museum, there is only the 'Drukkerijmuseum Meppel' which is moderately popular. So, if museum space is incorporated into the Grote- of Mariakerk, it should be as a supportive function, more like an art gallery/artist workspace where local artist can show their work or where there is space for temporary expositions.

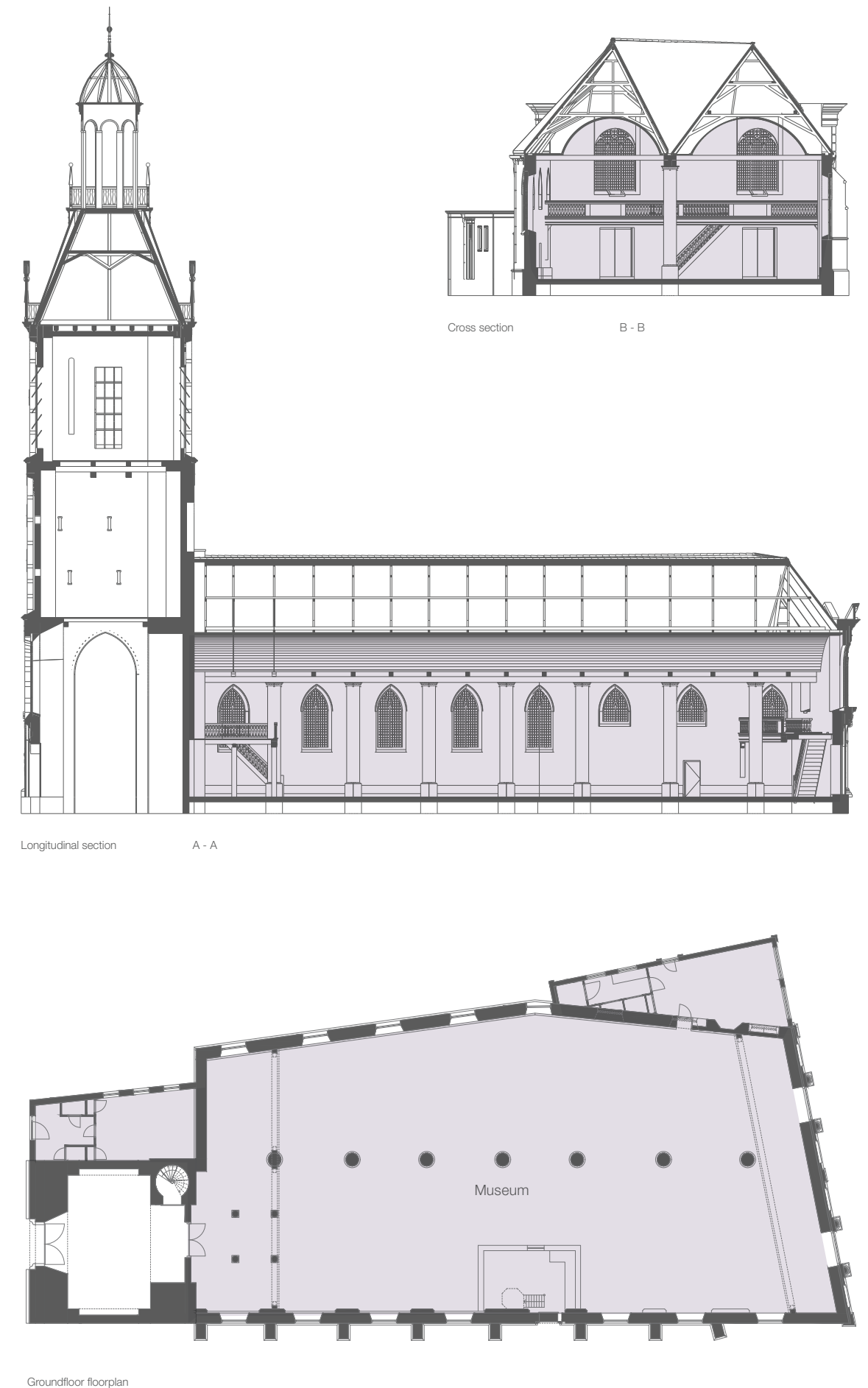


Figure 28 - the products presented for the museum scenario - (own work)





Figure 29 - the products presented for the housing / hotel scenario - (Media team, 2018)

#### Housing/Hotel + Densify - expand inwards

As discussed earlier, the idea of housing is a doom scenario amongst the locals of Meppel. interesting, however, is that *Leo, Kor, Berend, and Herman* each did not share this opinion. They all weren't necessarily for the idea of housing, but they didn't exclude it either. They all shared the opinion that use is always above vacancy, and that the most important thing is that the building has a soul, otherwise it's pointless to keep it. Herman even mentioned the idea of keeping the facades 5 meters behind it free and creating a scenic/public route through the church that tells its story together with the Meppeler tower. The core of the building could then be used for housing. They do, however, all get the frustration towards housing, as it would privatize or commercialize the building, it would mean losing the function of gathering,

and would lose its character as public property. So, even to them, housing (or a hotel) is a last resort. Furthermore, while there is a housing shortage, there isn't necessarily a single group that misses housing like students in Amsterdam for example. So, the need for housing in the church does not feel that high either. While they all share the view that tourism is more than welcome in Meppel, the function of a hotel in the church would face the same backlash as housing. More than anything, it is important that the church stays open for public use, as the church is very symbolic of Meppel and what it means to be a from Meppel. The church is public property and a place of gathering is very influential to its Sense of Place. So, if anything, housing or a hotel function would diminish the Grote- of Mariakerk's Sense of Place as it would mean privatizing or commercializing the church.

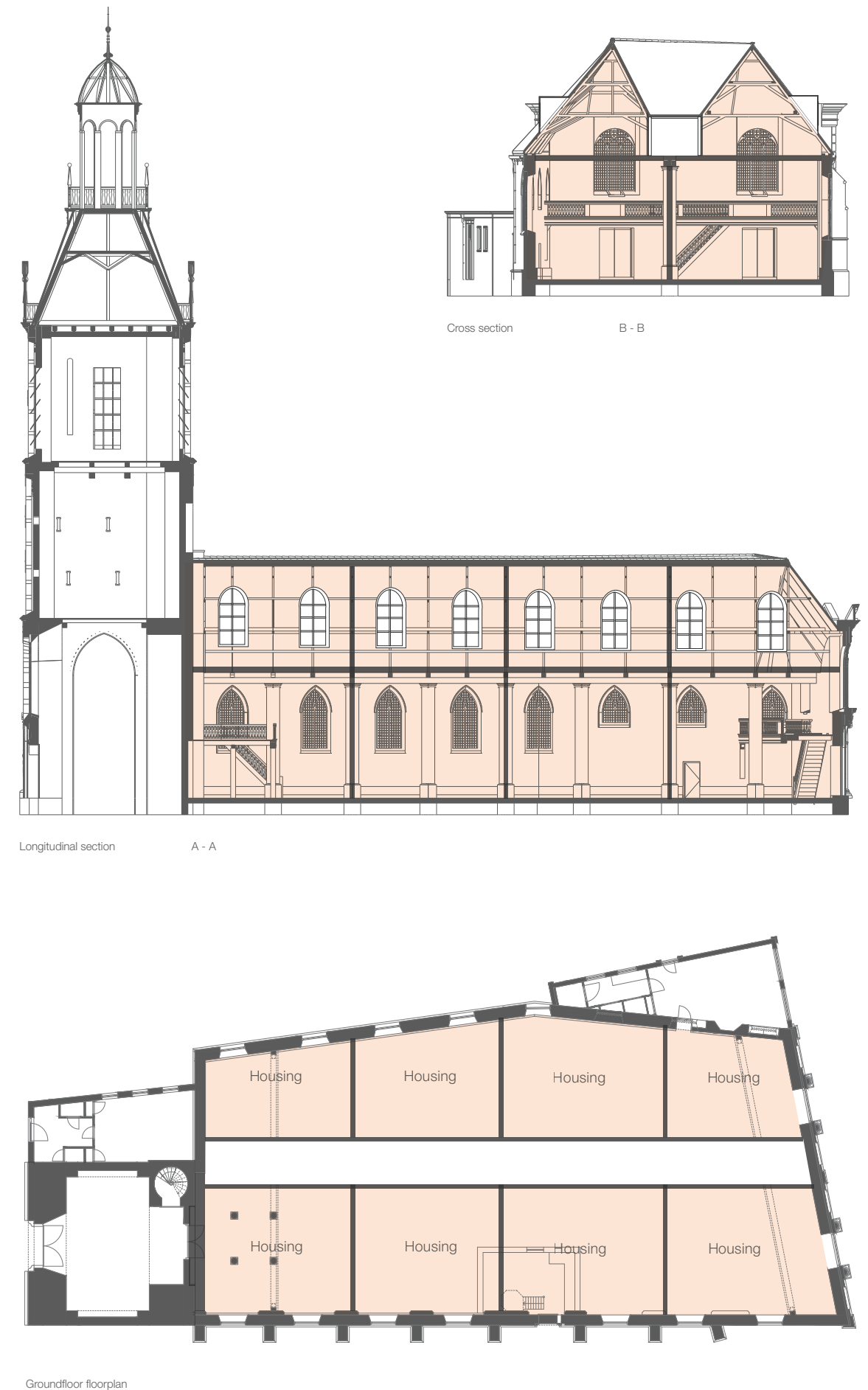


Figure 30 - the products presented for the Housing/Hotel scenario - (own work)



Figure 31 - the products presented for the garden scenario - (Landon, 2022)

#### Inside Garden space + Eliminate - Creating by removing

The Inside Garden received the shortest and possibly blandest response, as each of the participants was quite simply, not impressed. *Herman* asked some questions about the idea and thinks it's more fitting for ruined churches, but the Inside Garden did not spark much debate. So, short story short, the Inside Garden is not fit for the Grote- of Mariakerk, and in a way does nothing good or bad for its Sense of Place, but it would change it significantly.

#### Functions mixes: Culture mix + Housing and public use

Aside from the single-use scenarios, the main consensus of the first feedback moment is that the new use of the Grote- of Mariakerk should be a mixture of functions. The idea of mixed-use in general was received as the most realistic and positive. Two scenarios were presented, a mixture of the cultural public functions and a mixture of housing and public use.

By far the most positivity was towards the mixture of cultural functions as the participants felt that it encapsures what the church is and should be. A low-threshold 'communal' facility provides the opportunity

for gatherings, celebrations, and commemorations in the form of concerts, lectures, or personal meetings. A plan like this would open up the church for a variety of users and would encapture that the church building is representative of Meppel. So, for all the residents of Meppel. Of course, financial feasibility provides somewhat of a problem, but the cultural mixture does encapture the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

The mixture of housing and public use was somewhat of a shock or unknown to some of the participants. *Leo and Kor*, could simply not see the mixture, as people would find it a strange idea to live above a store or library. *Berend* feels like housing or a hotel is a last resort, even if it is mixed with other use. *Herman* felt the mixture in a sense would be ideal. Of course, he prefers complete public access, but he feels it would provide a solid business case and that people would be quick to forget the housing use as long as part of the building remains public, as discussed before. However, the conclusion remains that the participants were mostly for the mixture of cultural functions.

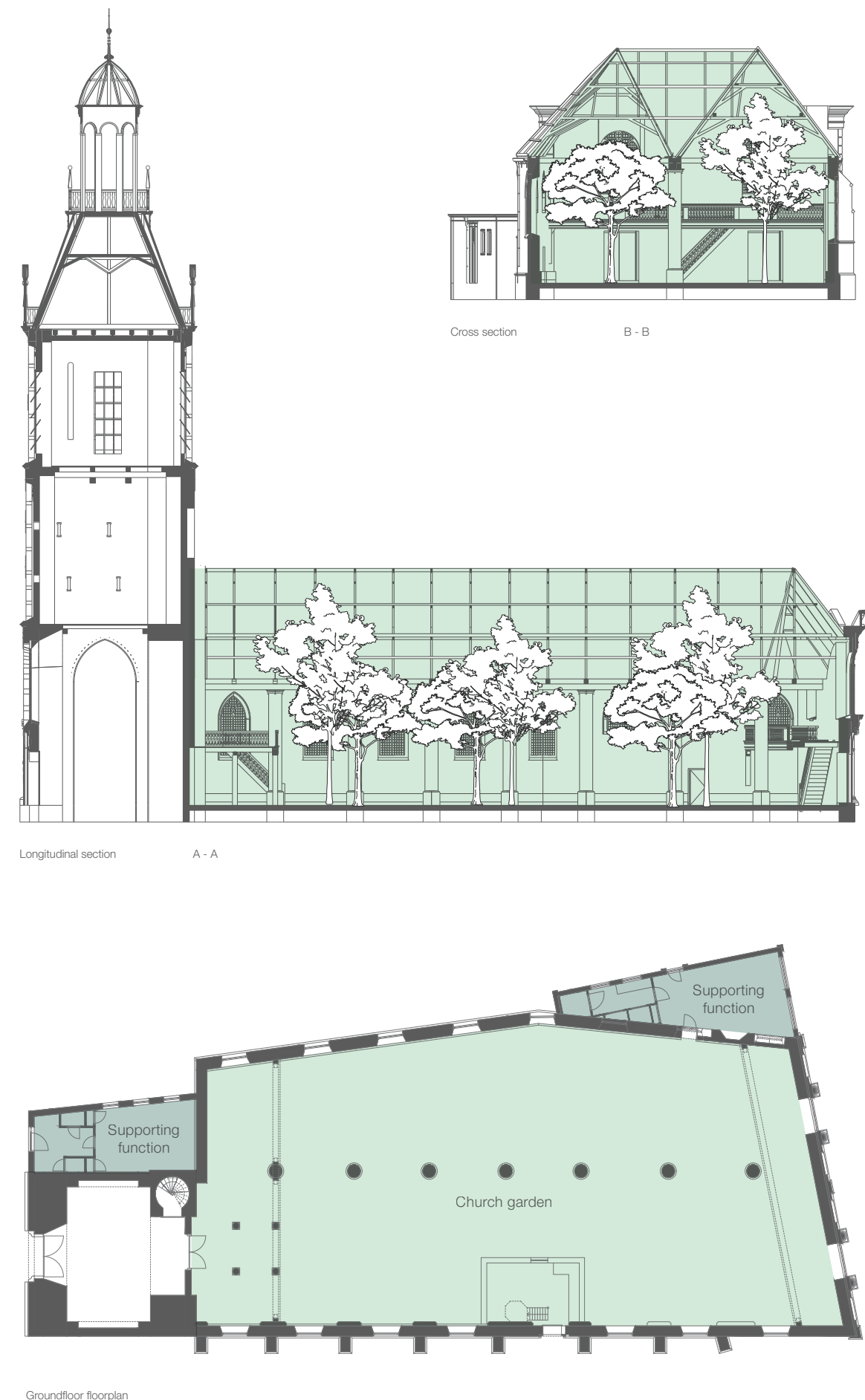


Figure 32 - the products presented for the garden scenario - (own work)



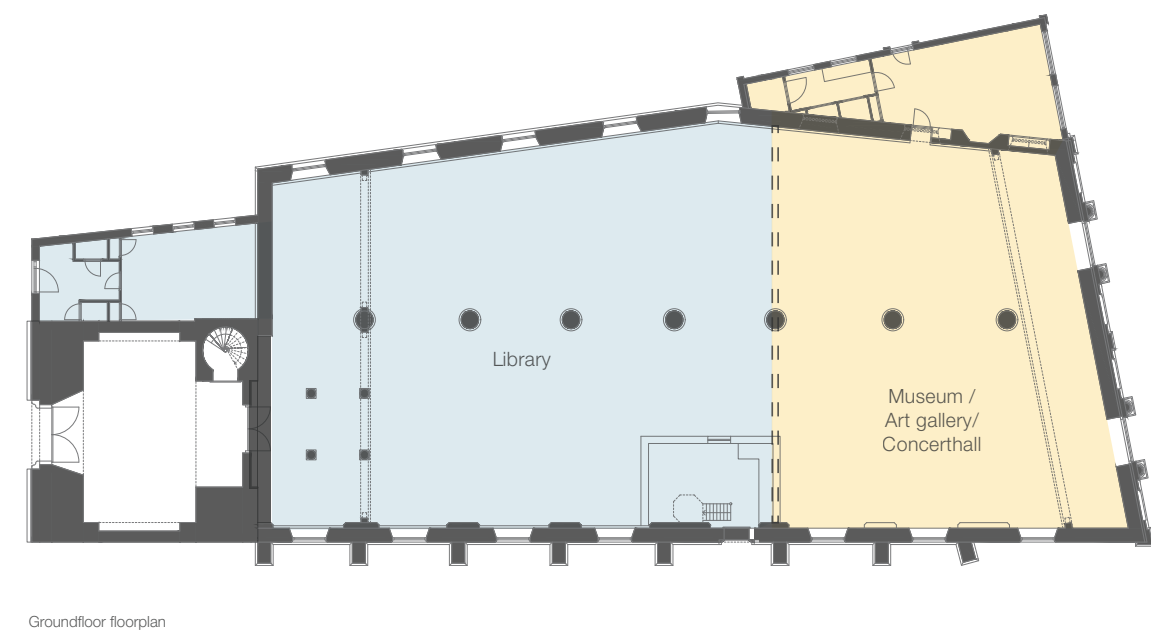
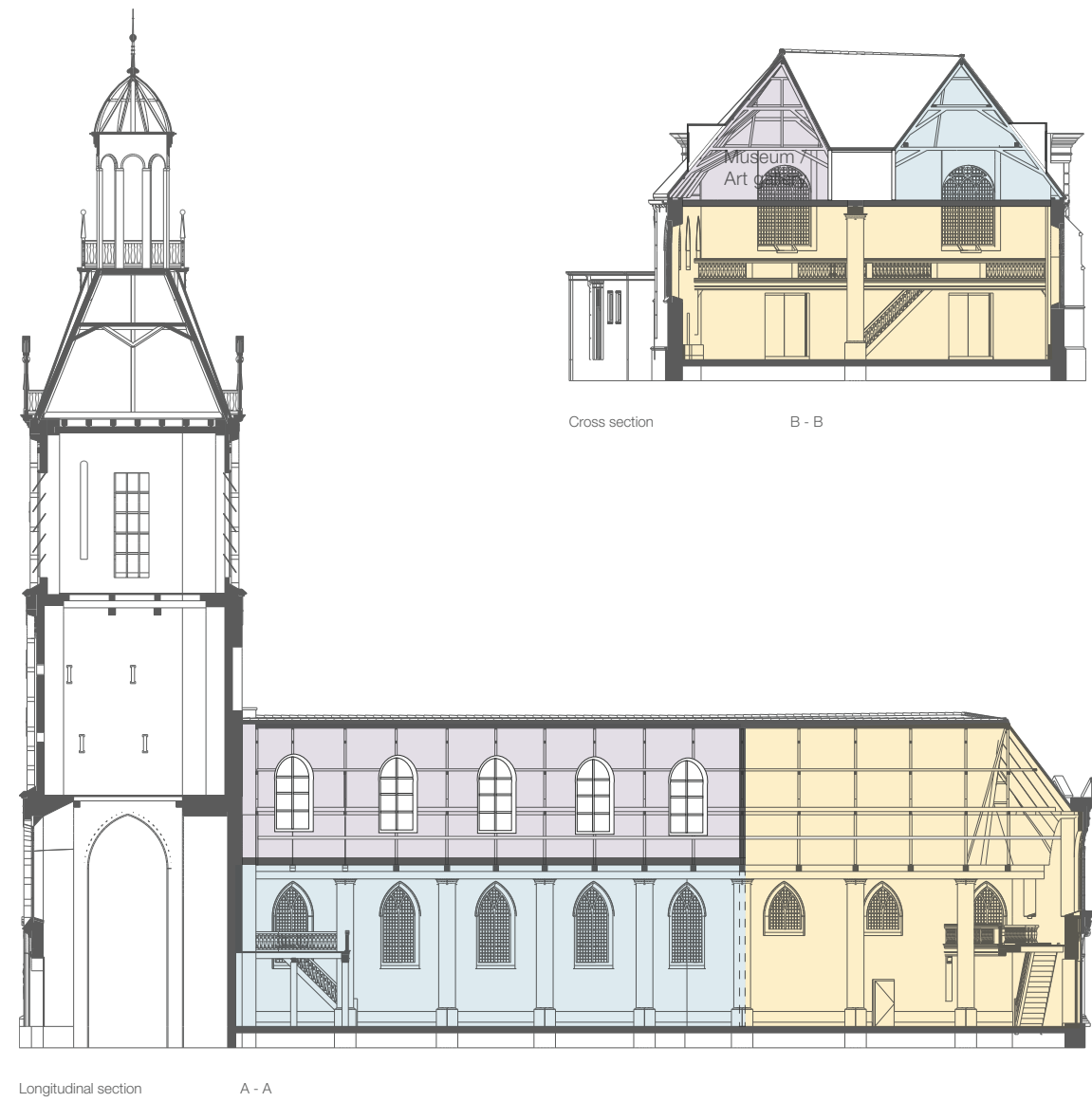


Figure 33 - the products presented for the culture mix scenario - (own work)

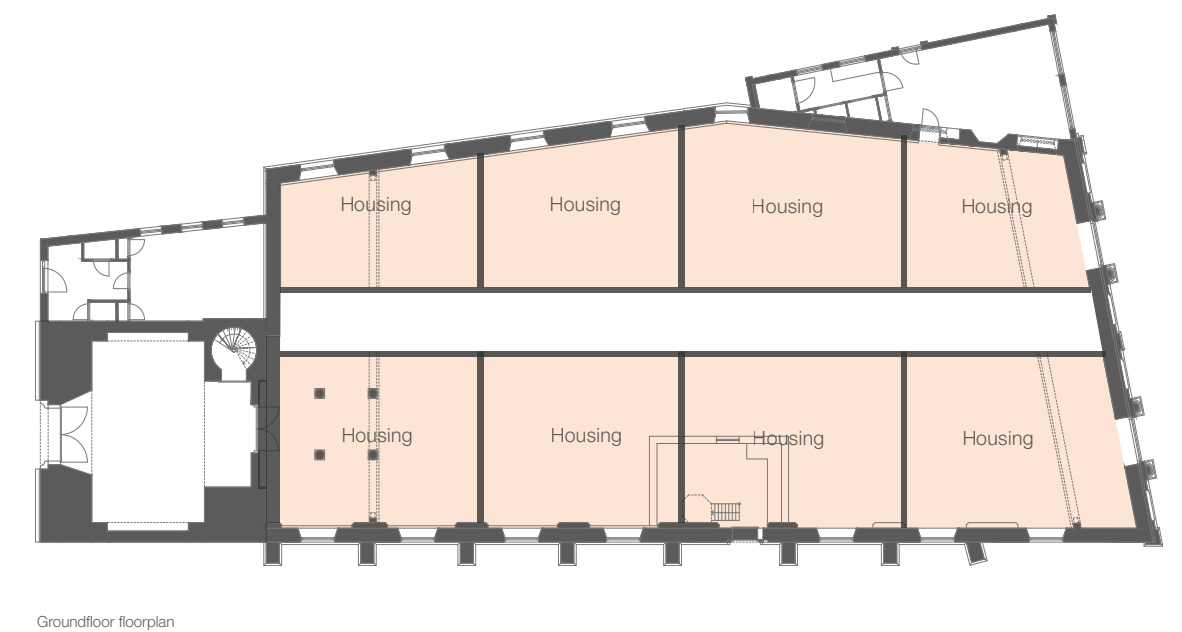
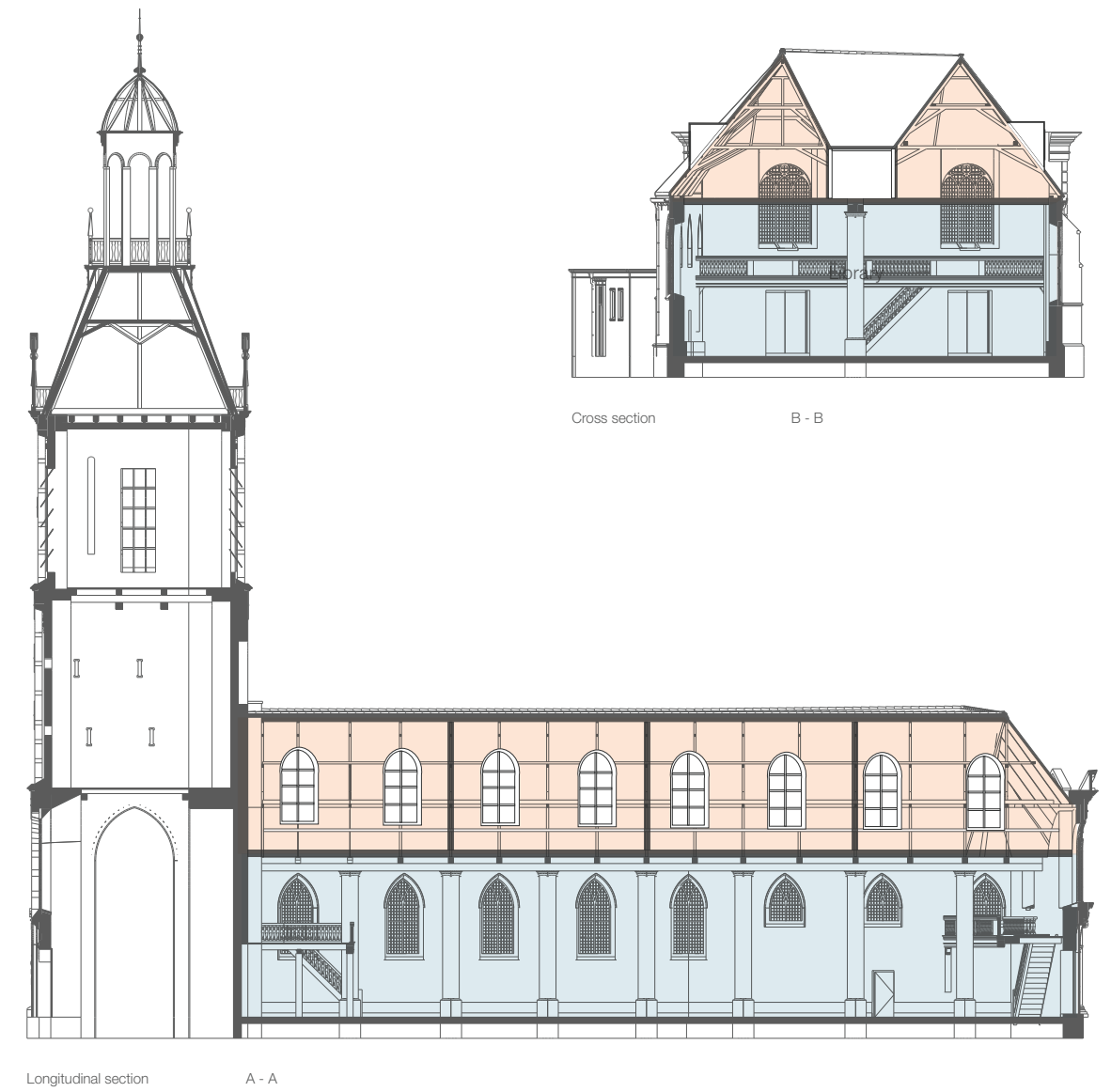


Figure 34 - the products presented for the housing and public mix scenario - (own work)



*Building extensions + Copy - building on blueprints / Comma instead of a full stop / Overlay - symbiotic spaces*

While this part of the research was mainly to ask the participants about interventions with the function of the building, the form aspect was also discussed, as it is important to measure opinions. Are extensions okay, out of the question, or only justified in a certain style? This was also the part where most of the participants themselves came up with examples of adjusted or transformed churches. The consensus is that if an extension is necessary, it is completely justified. *Leo, Kor, and Berend* even mentioned that there were plans made by the church to extend on the south side towards the church square, but that they were denied. This is because the church square and Grote- of Mariakerk are seen in unison and the use of the square is too important. So, even if there was to be an extension it should be a minimal extension on the south side, but rather not. The open square is seen as very important, that's why the north facade could be a better place to extend the building! *Herman* even went as far as stating that it is important to add a new layer to the Grote- of Mariakerk. The story of the church should be continued to be told and time should be stagnated. When the church is maintained as is, we are stopping the Grote- of Mariakerk's story. Hence, why *Herman* feels the addition to the church should be expressing the styles and materials of today. *Leo, Kor, and Berend* to a certain extent expressed the same, not in words, but through the fact that all the examples they showed were quite contemporary, with lots of glass, openings, and different materials than those of the original church buildings. So, the placement of the intervention is a large point of discussion. The extension of the Grote- of Mariakerk is not out of the question, as it is in line with the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk, and to some, it is even a necessity to continue or add/change the building to continue telling its story.

#### Examples mentioned by the participants

Aside from the references, examples, and ideas I presented and brought to discuss during the conversations with the participants, I found it quite remarkable how many

examples the participants came up with themselves. As mentioned before, the examples were mostly used to represent things they liked about how there was intervened with the form of the church buildings, but it does provide a good idea of how the participants think there should be interacted with the Grote- of Mariakerk. Apart from the fact that they like these transformed or rebuild buildings, there, of course, is also a reason for their admiration. Hence, why a short stop is taken to discuss the references from the participants and why they liked them.

During the conversation with *Leo and Kor*, they mentioned the Oude Kerk in Ermelo and the Koepelkerk in Smilde, both churches where the extension is a contemporary connection between old and new. They predominantly liked the contrast that the bridge highlighted. *Berend* mentioned the Kerk from Oud Avereest which he found very nice because the addition to the church blended very well into the church and the landscape despite the contrasting style and materials. *Herman* mentioned the Kalkovens in Meppel, which isn't a church but is an intervention with a monumental building. There he liked the contrast between the old and the new, as it allowed the new addition to help tell the story of the old, it provided a soul to the building. While these examples in the end are nothing more than nice references, it does provide some insight into the type of interventions the locals admire. Which in this case, are mostly contrasting and contemporary additions to the building that aren't necessarily too predominant towards the 'original building'.

#### Takeaways from XPEX's research into the Grote- of Mariakerk

Before certain conclusions are drawn from the first feedback moment with the locals from Meppel, a stop to take a look at XPEX's research into possible future use for the Grote- of Mariakerk. During their research, they looked at common trends in Meppel and interviewed local stakeholders to pulse their opinions regarding repurposing. To provide a more complete

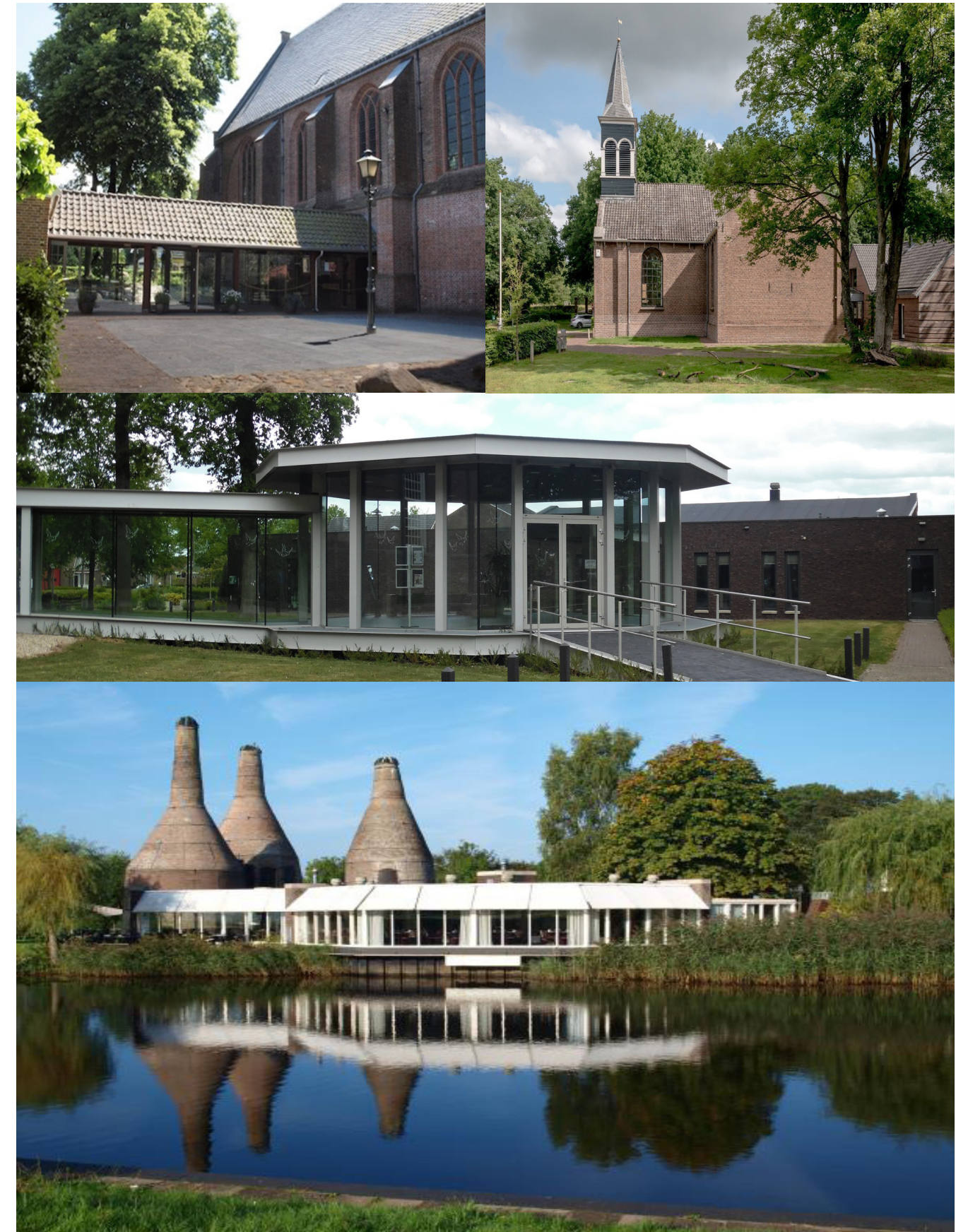


Figure 35 - the examples mentioned by the participants during the conversations - (Architecten, z.d.) (Het Kompas I Zaalverhuur & catering, z.d.) (Qualis, z.d.) (N.Z., 2019)



answer/conclusion to the first feedback moment which predominantly focussed on the use of the Grote- of Mariakerk XPEX's main findings are also incorporated.

As presented earlier, their research emphasized the symbolic meaning the church has and that it feels or is perceived as the beating heart of Meppel. Hence, why within their interviews they found that the stakeholder thinks that the church should be a 'culture house' for Meppel, with possibilities for music, presentations, and expositions. Even though the cultural awareness in Meppel is relatively low, they do feel these functions would fit as they are also very close to the original use of the Grote- of Mariakerk before its closing. Furthermore, it should provide a low-threshold facility that makes the church feel like a place for everyone, a living room for the city. Hence, why they feel that as a main function, the library would be an excellent fit. The library 2.0 as they call it would facilitate the main function and additional use like, music, expositions, lectures, etc. It would also provide the opportunity for additional temporary use, like opening up the church in the summer with an exposition that could provide indoor use and a connection with the square. The church tower should remain as a vantage point in combination with an exposition about the history of the church. All and all, their research concludes the Grote- of Mariakerk should be transformed towards a more local variant of examples like the Loc Hall in Tilburg, Forum in Groningen, DE PETRUS VUGHT, the library in Utrecht, the OBA in Amsterdam, or the Stadkamer in Zwolle. In short, a public interior functioning as a living room for the city. (XPEX, 2022)

**Conclusion of the first feedback moment**

The goal of the overall research question: *“How do transformation scenarios affect the sense of place of the Grote- of Mariakerk for the local community?”*, is to help determine what the limits of acceptable change are to the Grote- of Mariakerk's Sense of Place. In other words, what is acceptable to the local community's Sense of Place when intervening in the form and function of the

building during its transformation? This is to make sure the local emotional bond and perception of the church are not damaged or diminished. The first feedback moment, where the function and significant form interventions were discussed was the first part of this research. This was an important first step, as a wrong design decision at this stage could be very detrimental to the church's Sense of Place. Of course, as the research and design continue the later feedback moments will go into much more detail, so it is not done yet. Nevertheless, it is important to discuss the main findings thus far.

First and foremost, the outer limits to the Grote- of Mariakerk's Sense of Place have been determined. A very strong characteristic or a factor towards the church's Sense of Place is the idea that the Grote- of Mariakerk is symbolic of Meppel and the people from Meppel. An important aspect of that is that the structure is accessible to everyone as if the church is public property. So, all the functions that would privatize or commercialize the church would damage the church significantly. Meaning the outer boundary is that the church must remain public, as shown in figure 36. A mixture between housing and public use would be on this border but is still a last resort. Furthermore, the Grote- of Mariakerk has always been used as a building for cultural events like organ concerts. But more than anything, the Grote- of Mariakerk is a place for gathering, meeting, and celebration. The limits to which extend the function of the Grote- of Mariakerk can be changed, as shown in figure 57, that it should maintain public, preferably cultural, but more than anything a place for gathering, meeting, and celebration. So, this means that a music venue and library really fit these requirements and a museum falls somewhere between cultural use and the core of the Sense of Place, which is logical when looking at the scenario meetings.

Regarding the intervention to the form of the building, the outer limit is that an extension or alteration of the form is acceptable, and removing large significant building elements is unacceptable. If these interventions

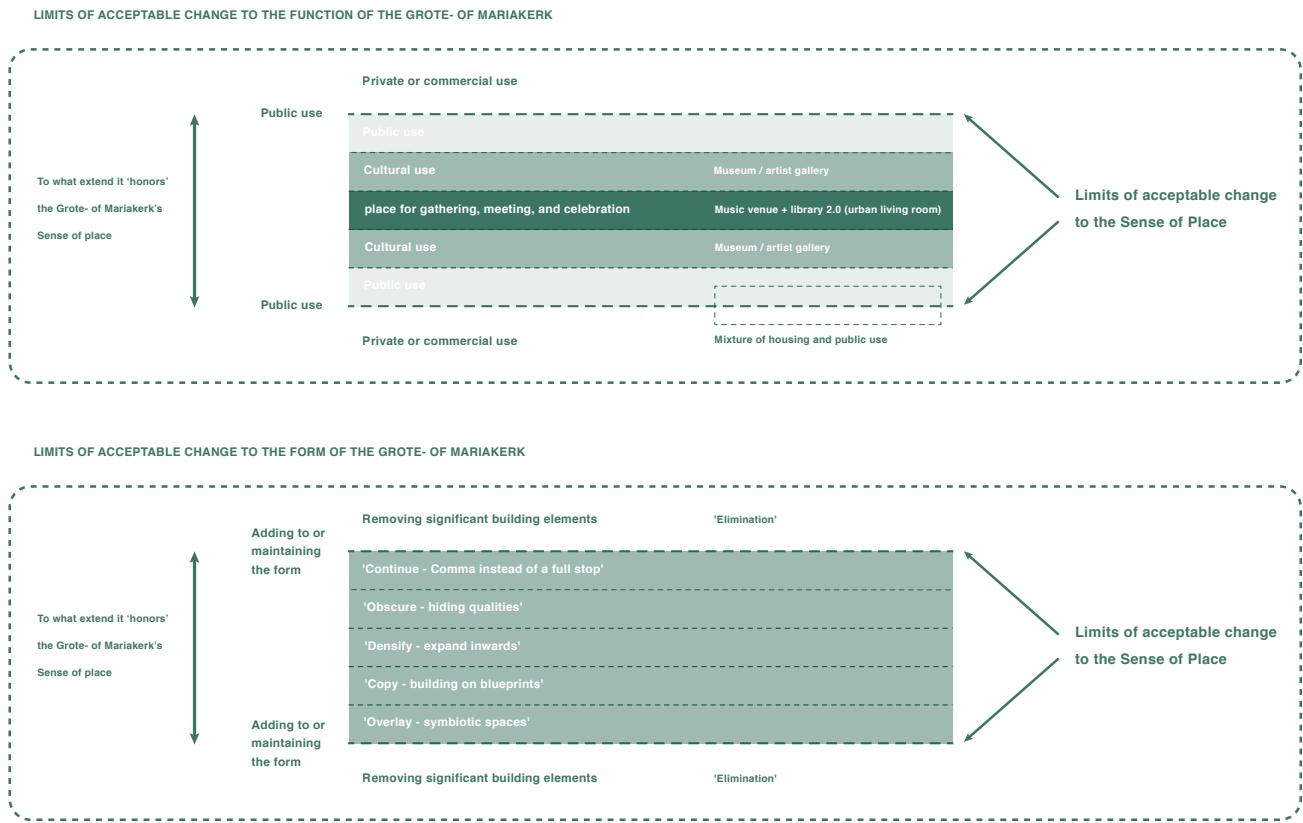


Figure 36 - the limits of acceptable change to the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk after the first scenario meetings based on the conversations with the participants (temporary) - (own work)

would be translated to the 10+1 Actions, then 'Continue - Comma instead of a full stop', 'Obscure - hiding qualities', 'Densify - expand inwards', 'Copy - building on blueprints', and 'Overlay - symbiotic spaces' would be acceptable and 'Elimination' unacceptable, as shown in figure 36. Of course, taking into consideration that these interventions al honor the factors that contribute to forming the Sense of Place as investigated during sub-question 3. This is still rather vague, as the form aspect has to be discovered further during the following scenario feedback moments. However, this is a start to determining the limits of acceptable change to the form of the building.

*So, to conclude the first scenario phase, the use as a library and music venue is most in line with the Sense of Place of the Grote- of Mariakerk, and the use of extensions to intervene with the Grote- of Mariakerk's form is acceptable and to some a must.*

## Appendix D - How do transformation scenarios affect the sense of place of the Grote- of Mariakerk for the local community? Pt. 2

*Results of the second conducted phase of scenario interviews - sub-question 4*

The investigation of the limits of acceptable change of the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk, as eluded to earlier, is split into two 'feedback' rounds. During the first phase, the focus was mainly on the interventions regarding the use of the church and large-scale form interventions. During this second phase, which is at the back end of the design, unlike the first phase, which was the start of the design process, the focus is on the execution of the design concept, the overall translation of the earlier interview results to design, the style/look of the form intervention, and the translation of earlier discussed use to design. During the first phase, the interviews were conducted with four people, whereas during this second phase, two (different people than before) participated in the research. Due to the change in participants, the interviews were separated into two parts. During the first part, several control questions were asked to see if the participants have different ideas than the locals that participated in the first phase of the research, and during the second phase, the topic of conversation was the sketch/preliminary design.

### **Doubts about the second phase of interviews**

The smaller amount of participants during this phase was not only a result of a practical lack of time, but most of all a result of doubt about the value of the second phase of interviews in general. Considering that the first phase of interviews already gave a lot of input and useful results regarding the limits of acceptable change to function and form of the Grote- of Mariakerk, there were serious doubts about if the following phase of interviews would provide any new input because of several reasons.

First of all, forming a Sense of Place, as mentioned before, is a phenomenon born out of interaction and experience, which is not something that can be developed through drawings and visualizations. Hence, as is the goal of this research overall, you can only work with the existing Sense of Place, prepare as best as you can, and see the eventual results when the design is, well, built. Of course, as was the result of the research thus far, the incorporation of the Sense of Place in the design has had an integral effect on the eventual design and provided very useful and unexpected insights, but the truth remains, the actual effects can only be measured after the design has been built.

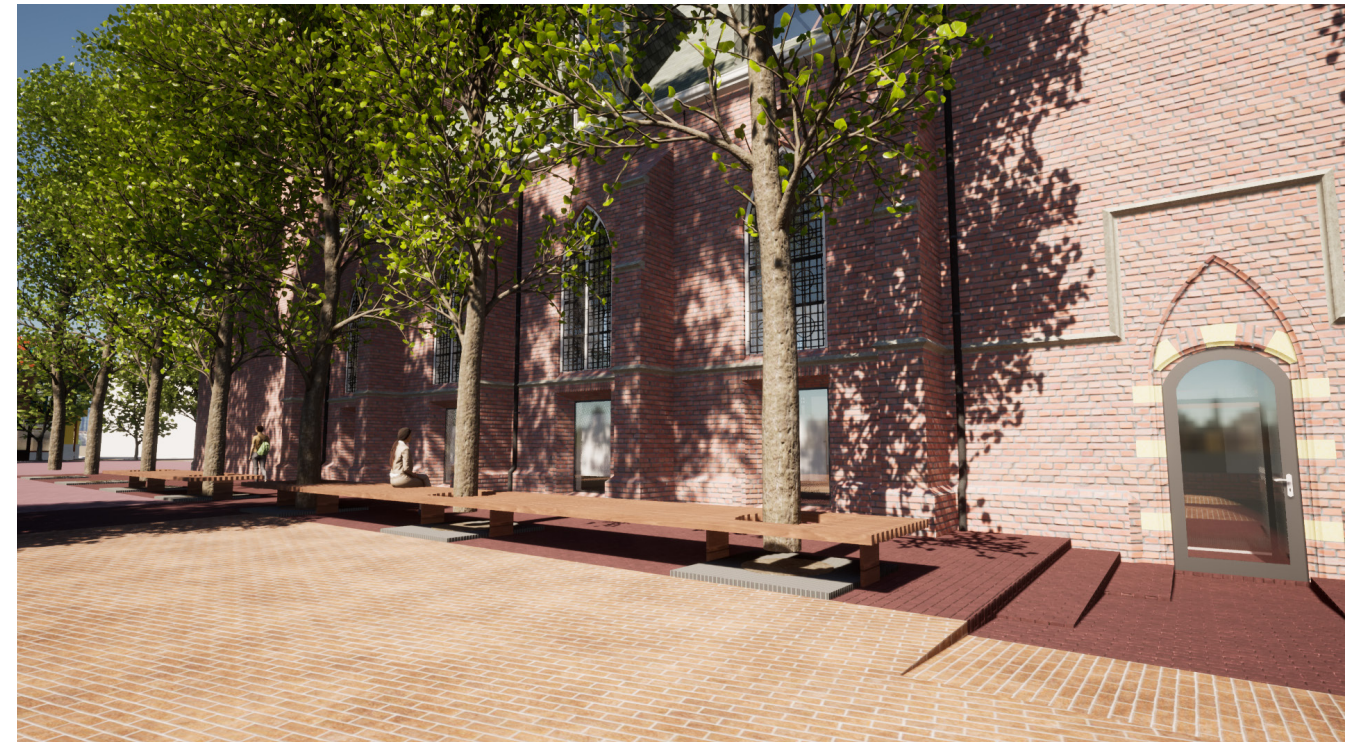


Figure 37 - Some of the 3D visualisations used during the second round of interviews assessing the affect of the sketch design on the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk - (own work)

Secondly, asking questions about the form interventions to the building can be difficult, as it is way more subjective and of less reason than interventions to the use of the building. If you ask someone if a library is a useful addition, that is a quite black-and-white question, based on factors like if there is a library in the first place, how many people regularly visit a library, and if the nature of the function fits the church. Whereas the look of something, is far more gray, some people like modern buildings, others a more classic approach, minimal or maximal, contrast or in conversation with the existing, there are more options regarding the form that can all be augmented, can be very different, and, as mentioned, are way more subjective. Not to forget, opinions change, one moment you like something, and the next moment you don't. Hence, why it is not easy to measure.

Finally, the first part of the research, as eluded to earlier, provided many insightful, unexpected, and integral research towards the approach of the design. So, from a practical perspective, taking both time and sample size

into consideration, there were questions about the value of more interviews. Would I have the time to approach many people, how people can I even reach, would I have the time to incorporate large possible changes, and would the time spent for the interviews even be valuable?

Nevertheless, as I did feel a second phase of interviews would provide a more complete research, could be of influence to the design, and could emphasize that the design direction taken was the right one, a chose to do a smaller sample size of interviews as a compromise. Maybe a gamble due to the reasons mentioned before, but in any case valuable to the research, as a negative result, or no results is also a result.

### **Results of the Interviews**

During the second phase of interviews, the topic of conversation was the sketch/preliminary design until that far through floor plans, sections, and 3D visuals, as shown in Figures 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, and 43. Two people participated in the interviews, Mo smit, a building



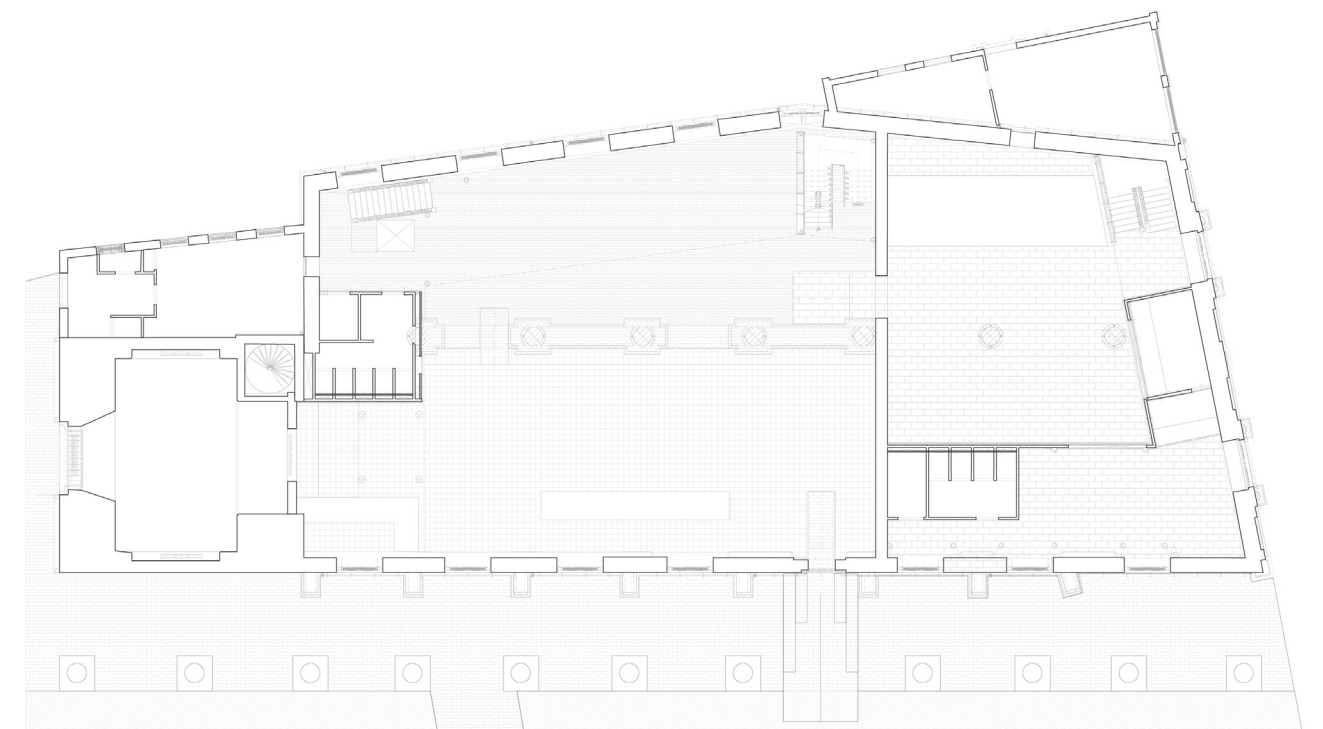
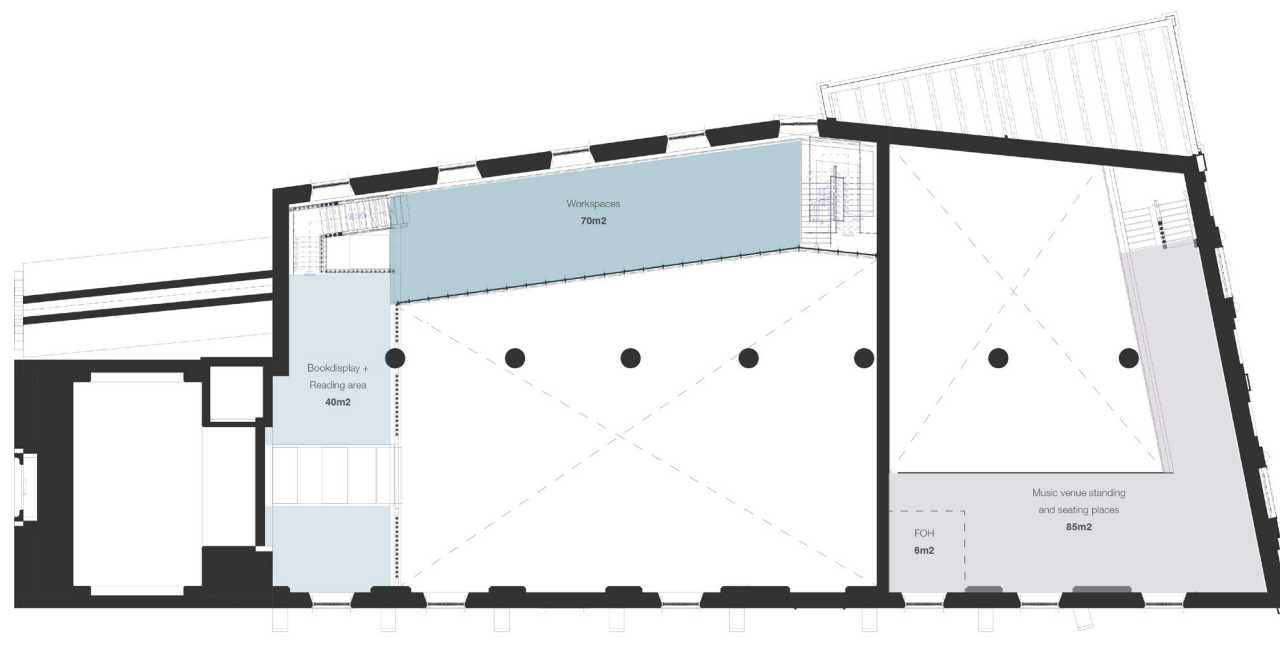
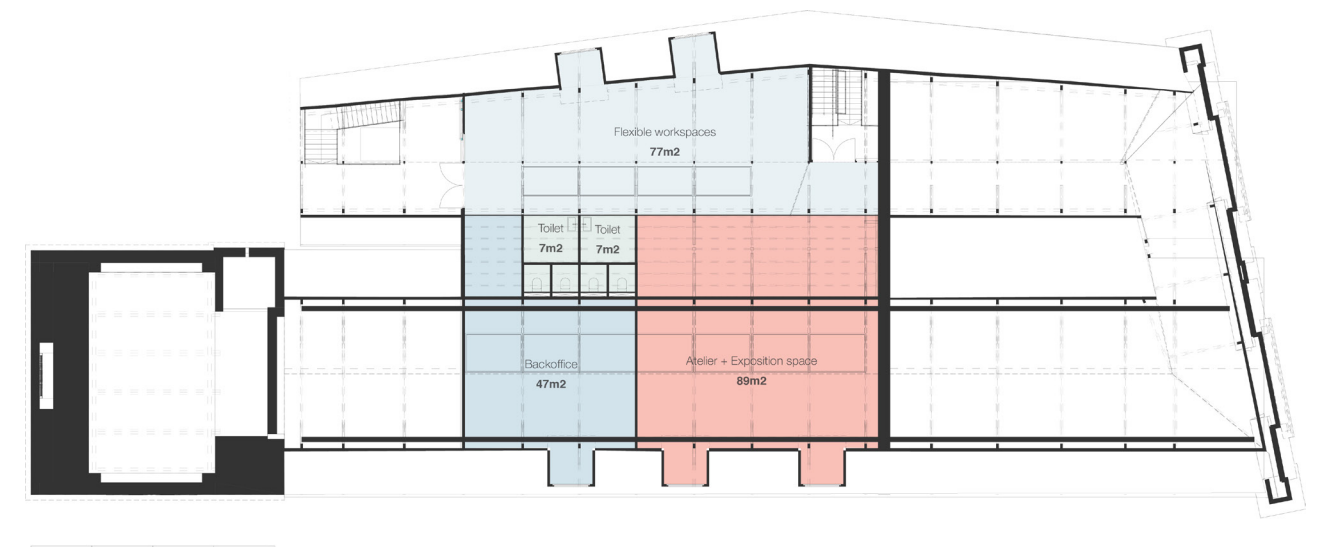
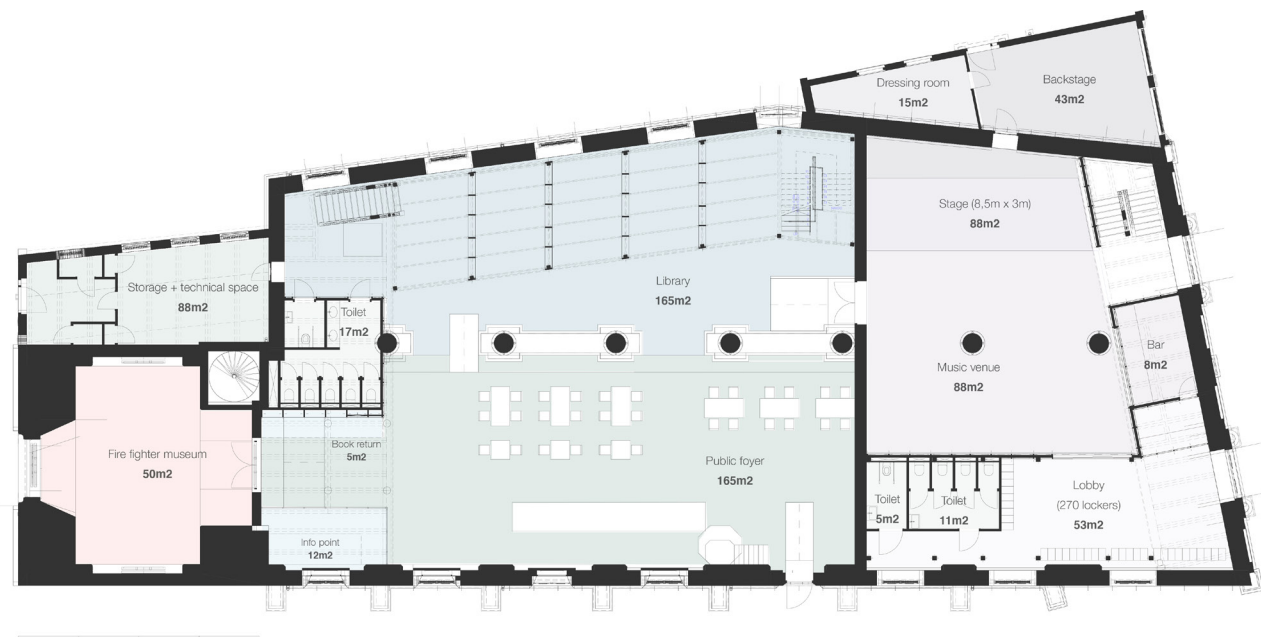


Figure 38 - Some of the floorplans used during the second round of interviews assessing the affect of the sketch design on the local's Sengen of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk - (own work)

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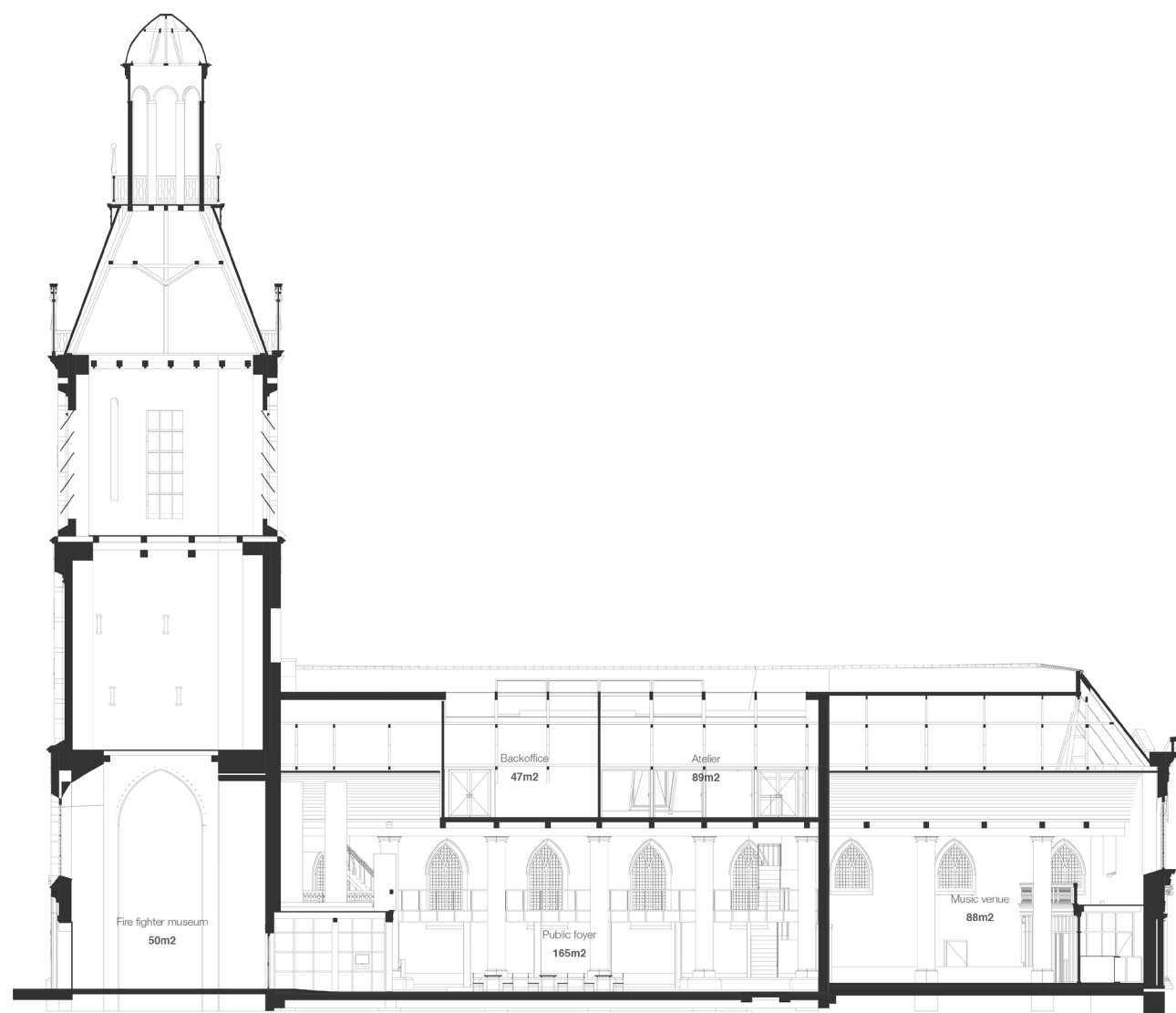


Figure 40 - Some of the sections used during the second round of interviews assessing the affect of the sketch design on the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk - (own work)

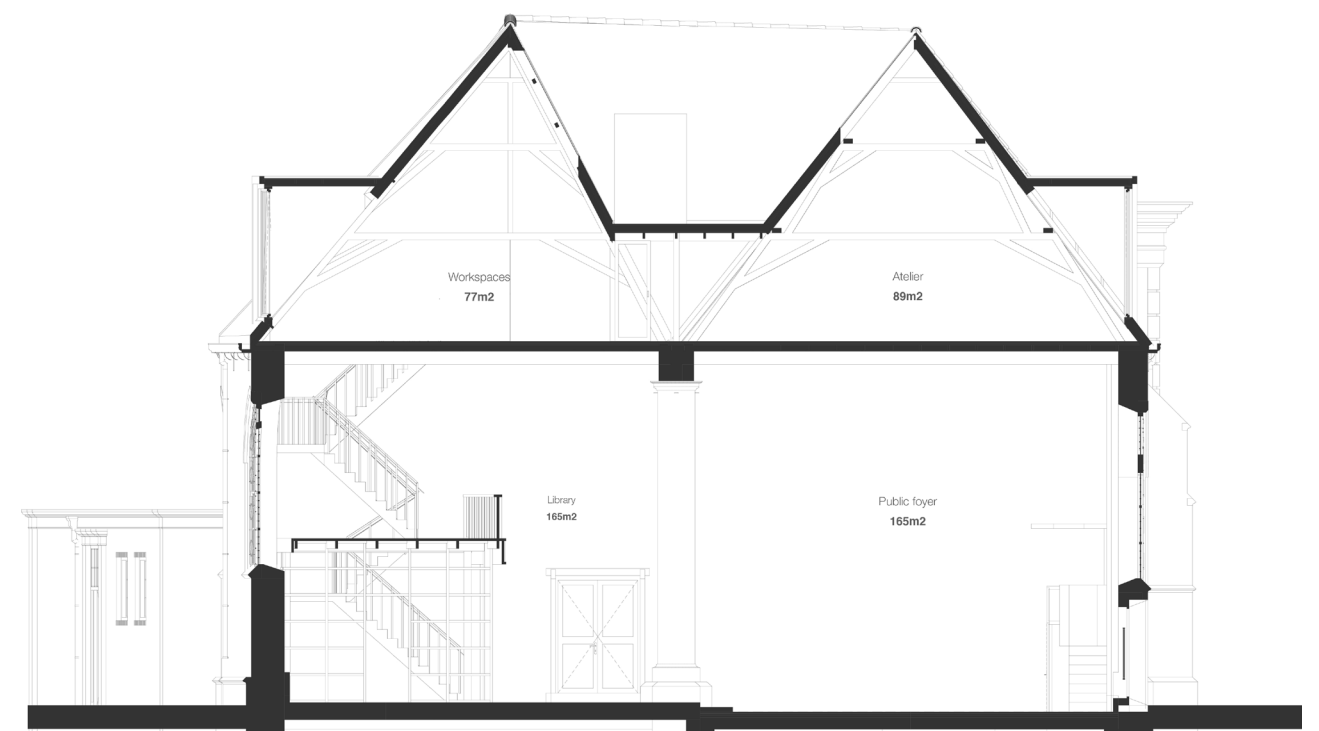


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Figure 42 - Some of the 3D visualisations used during the second round of interviews assessing the affect of the sketch design on the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk - (own work)



Figure 43 - Some of the 3D visualisations used during the second round of interviews assessing the affect of the sketch design on the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk - (own work)



technology tutor for a first ‘test’ interview, and Jemaira van den Velden, an ex-resident who lived in Meppel during her early 20’s. In any case, this part of the research introduced participants of a younger age group and went as followed (see below):

As mentioned before, the first couple of ‘control’ questions draws back to the earlier phase of scenario interviews, to check if those results align with the ideas of the new participants, add to the representativeness of the research, and possibly ad an opposing sound/opinion within the research. While it was the intention to split the interviews in two, it ended up being a far more fluent and criss-cross conversation jumping between topics, here are the main answers and takeaways from the interviews:

*The Grote- of Mariakerk is seen as a public property, a building that is for everyone in Meppel. Hence, why privatizing the building was seen as unacceptable. As a result, also considering existing trends, a library was pursued as one of the two main programs. Would you say that is a fitting program in line with the historic role of the church as a community home?*

Both participants were completely fine with the library program and thought it was logical, and good, but not exceptional. Jemaira, however, did mention that she felt that the library function provides a good ‘middle’ option, that essentially makes the church accessible and approachable for everyone, which is good considering the nature and symbolic character of the church.

*One of the main findings when measuring people’s affection/attachment to the Grote- of Mariakerk, is that it is perceived as a place of commemoration and celebration, even more than a house of worship. With that in mind, (also based on general research) I chose to enhance that sense of celebration by adding the program of a concert hall /music venue, do you feel that is a program in line with your idea of the church and a good addition in general?*

In contrast to the library, both participants were far more enthusiastic about the music venue, as they both felt it to be a good addition to Meppel, that could facilitate existing trends or provide needs for the city. Mo mentioned it to be a good fit as a space for the popular pop collective Xodus and Jemaira deemed it as a ‘needed addition’. Also providing more to do for people from the villages outside of Meppel. In contrast to earlier interviews, Mo mentioned that a lot of young people from the neighboring villages come to ‘party’ in Meppel.

*The earlier interviews showed that there is somewhat of a gap regarding cultural or art awareness within Meppel, nevertheless, I chose to pursue the program of an artist gallery, as many local artists are working from home. Is there a need for a program like this in general? Or does it take up to much space in the design?*

Unlike earlier interviews, Mo believed that there is a need in Meppel for places that present local art and artist. Not only as there could be ‘more’ in Meppel, but also as it fits the local pride present in Meppel. While maybe the cultural awareness might not be as high, there is a local pride and awareness towards local artists and a pride for local history. So, a place that is representative of that is both in line with what the church represents, the local pride, and a good addition for Meppel in general.

*Regarding the form and appearance of the building the last interviews provided 2 trends, almost everyone felt a building extension to be necessary, however, regarding the style there were different opinions. So, is an extension necessary, and should it be a ‘modern’ glass box or a contemporary translation of the existing church?*

Both participants agreed that a change or addition would be representative of the history and nature of the church. There were, however, doubts about if an entirely new building part/extension would be the only way of showing that, as Jemaira questioned if that wouldn’t be too dominant and covering towards the

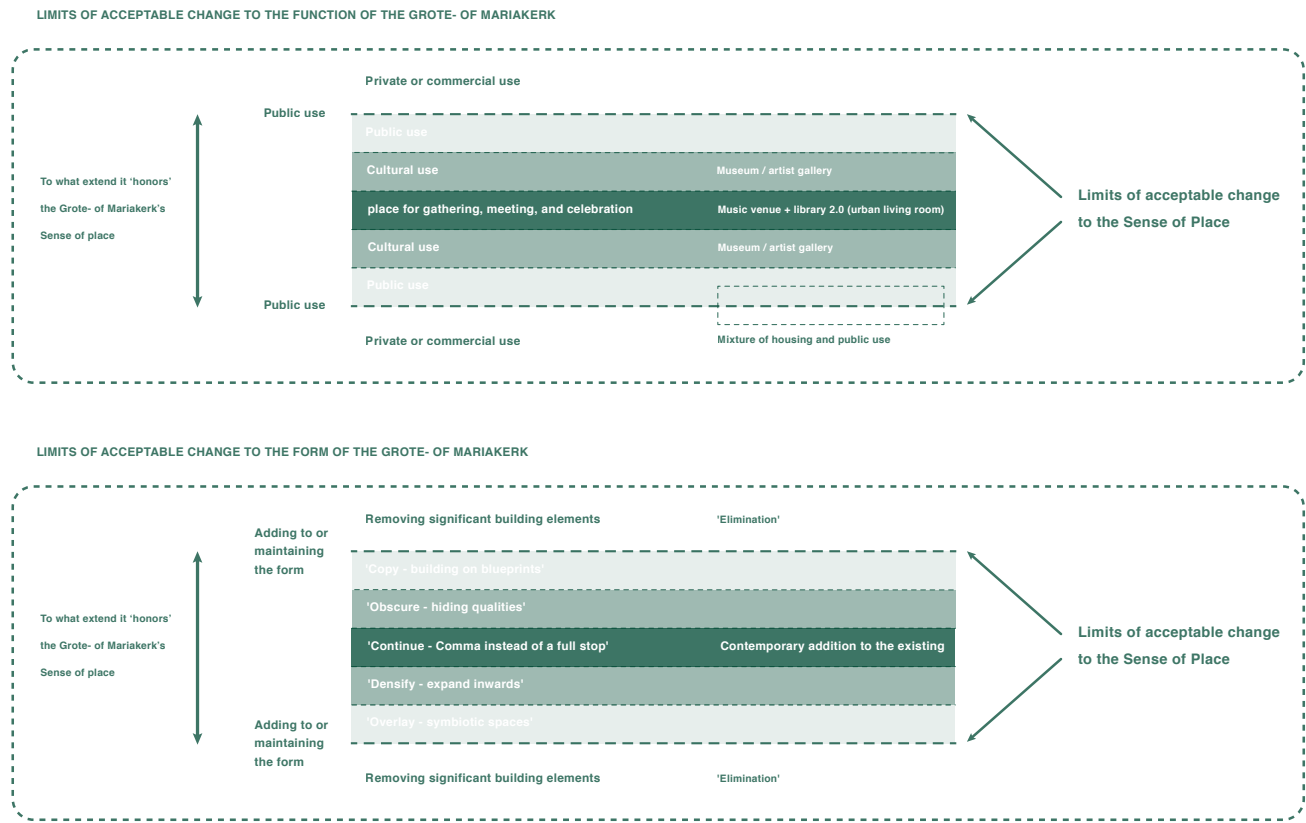


Figure 44 - the limits of acceptable change to the form and function of the Grote- of Mariakerk after the second scenario meetings based on the conversations with the participants - (own work)

original church. They did feel, however, as a reaction to the sketch design, that opening up the church facade towards the church square was a good idea. Also reinstating the facade in the south facade was deemed a nice way of connecting the church and church square.

*Regarding the overall style and approach, I chose to emphasize the existing Grote- of Mariakerk and its history, by going for a more subtle design language that more than anything hopes to unfold the church as it is by introducing a contemporary translation of what is and unfolding the story that the church tells, is that a fitting approach that honors your idea of the church?*

This was not an easy question to answer, as it is as mentioned before much about personal preference and because the only thing to react on was my design. Maybe if I had two scenarios or options, an easier conversation could have been had. Nevertheless, there was a consensus that the subtle and modest nature of the design

complements the existing, and there is some “strength within that approach. Furthermore, it was noted that the way that the materials were used in the storytelling was a nice language or way of designing present in the approach of the church.

### Conclusion

So, in addition to the first round of scenario-based interviews, I am now able to provide a more complete answer to the question posed before: “How do transformation scenarios affect the sense of place of the Grote- of Mariakerk for the local community?”. While the second round proved to be more of a confirmation of the research done before and a way of providing more nuance, it did not provide any life-changing input to the design. This is a result of possibly three things: the first one being that my design is very much based on the church’s symbolism and story encapsulating nature. So, considering it stays very close to the church as it is, it is also logical people are accepting of the design, even

more, logical when considering that earlier interviews with locals are integral to the design. Secondly, there was only 1 design to react to, which makes talking about different things may be difficult. So, a point of discussion would be that it would have been good to have these interviews somewhere at the middle stages of the design (during the big choices), however, practically, this was not possible. And third, you can wonder if people are blunt enough to say harsh things about the design, nevertheless, I did not get the idea the participants were beating around the bush and did feel like the design intent was in line with the overall attachment of the Grote- of Mariakerk.

Nevertheless, the interviews proved more nuance, data in general, and a sense of confirmation to prior research and how the design encaptures the local appreciation of the church. As a result, in addition to the earlier interviews, I am now able to provide a much more complete image of the limits of acceptable change to the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk. The first round of interviews already provided a very good idea of what changes to the function of the church were deemed acceptable, this round of interviews only emphasized those results, as shown in Figure 44. However, regarding the form of the building, a more specific answer can now be provided, as the interviews showed that a contemporary addition to or translation of the design would be most fitting to the existing perception of the Grote- of Mariakerk, as shown in figure 44. *So, as a more complete answer, a transformation of the Grote- of Mariakerk that stays within the limits presented by Figure 44, which means a new function that is at the very least public and ideally embraces the church's nature of the celebration, commemoration, and gathering in combination with an approach to the form of the building that adds a new time layer by addition, change or extension in a complementary and contemporary translation of the existing would work towards a translation that honors and stays close the local's Sense of Place towards the Grote- of Mariakerk.*

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